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Report to the January 29, 1978, United Secretariat Meeting on the Situation in the Colombian PST

By Jean-Pierre Riel

Gestation of the Crisis

In the report I gave at the October 1977 meeting of the United Secretariat on the September convention of the Colombian Socialist Workers Party (PST—Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores), I said that a crisis within the organization was reflected at the convention. At that time, it was not clear how this crisis would develop. By the time of the PST Central Committee meeting in December, however, the question was settled. In fact, the convention represented the beginning of what has become a major crisis in the Colombian PST. The development of this crisis can be illustrated by the following:

- In May 1977 Comrade Ricardo Sánchez, a founding leader of the PST, was suspended from the PST for six months.

- At the Central Committee meeting in early December, Comrade Sánchez and four other leading comrades—Jaime Galarza, Gladys Jiménez, Gustavo Vivas, and Ciro Roldan—were expelled.

- Immediately following the Central Committee meeting, Comrade Socorro Ramírez, also a PST leader and the party's presidential candidate, was expelled.

- Today, at the end of January 1978, more than 315 comrades (full members and candidates) have either been expelled or are in the process of being expelled. This represents a large portion if not the majority of the organization.

Two questions took up more than two-thirds of the time of the September 1977 convention—the case of Comrade Sánchez and the charge that Comrade Sánchez and others had formed a secret faction whose aim was the destruction of the party.

When I reported on the convention at the October United Secretariat meeting, I was unable to give you all the details of the accusations against Comrade Sánchez, because the documentation was not available. At the time of the convention, Comrade Sánchez had already been suspended for four months—with two more months to serve. The convention, which was open to sympathizers, discussed for at least four hours whether Comrade Sánchez could enter the hall and listen to the debates. The convention was never informed of the precise charges against him. At that time, I asked for documentation on his case. But the written material was made available to me only at the December Central Committee meeting; and so I will first say a few things about the Sánchez case, because it underlies the subsequent developments.

The accusations against Comrade Ricardo Sánchez were first made by Comrade Nahuel Moreno in a 13-page letter (undated-Appendix A). The charges themselves are flimsy, but I want to concentrate on the method used.

First, the charges are based on opinions that Comrade Sánchez allegedly expressed in private discussions with

Comrade Moreno and in private letters to Comrade Gladys Jiménez.

Comrade Moreno—as a long-standing leader in Argentina, a country where there is a dictatorship—asks that his word be given greater weight than that of Comrade Sánchez.

At the end of his letter Comrade Moreno says:

“I want to confess to the Executive Committee and the Central Committee of the Colombian PST that I suffered two very deep subjective crises as a result of my relations with Comrade Ricardo, and these subjective crises may have left their mark on me. One of these subjective crises I have already mentioned; it relates to my disgust in relation to what he said at the June Central Committee meeting. The other was grave, although subjective. Since it is known to various members of the leadership and since I believe this could have predisposed me against Comrade Ricardo, I want to relate it, in relation to me personally and only as it concerns me. I expressly prohibit its being published for the rank and file and utilized against the comrade, because it could provoke reactions of an emotionally charged rather than political character. I authorize only that it be borne in mind in relation to me and for this sole reason I'm telling it.”

In the mimeographed version of this letter circulated in the PST, a blank space follows this explanation. In the name of seeking objectivity, of calling attention to possible subjectivity on his part, Comrade Moreno launches what he says is an accusation so grave against Comrade Sánchez that it can't even be written down. Thus the worst suspicions about Comrade Sánchez are created in the minds of comrades who read the letter.

With the agreement of Comrade Sánchez, I'll tell you what has been left out. Comrade Sánchez, who was formerly the “political secretary” of the Bolshevik Tendency, a founder and central leader of the Bloque Socialista (the organization which became the PST) and its representative to the United Secretariat, was accused of being a “racist.”

Since this figures among the accusations made against Comrade Sánchez, it's interesting to read the transcript of the May 10-11, 1977, discussion in the Executive Committee of the PST on his case, which was published by the PST (Appendix B), with a restricted circulation.

At least one-third of the transcript turns around one question—whether or not to postpone the discussion on his case. Part of Comrade Moreno's letter of accusation was handed to Comrade Sánchez the evening before the discussion was scheduled to take place, and the remainder was given to him an hour and a half before. On the basis that he had never before heard many of the accusations contained in the letter submitted by Comrade Moreno, he asked for a few days to study the charges and prepare a written reply.

In response to this request, Comrade Moreno asked Comrade Sánchez where he thought he was. The following is an excerpt from the transcript:

"RS: I need to study the evidence . . ."

"H: Why evidence, we're not in a trial . . ."

"RS: Obviously!"

"H: It's not a bourgeois trial."

"RS: It's not a bourgeois trial; it's the beginning of the truth."

"H: It's a proletarian trial . . ."

"H: Proletarian means reading and then saying 'I agree or I disagree.'"

Thus, Comrade Sánchez didn't need more time. According to "proletarian justice," as laid down by Comrade Moreno, the defendant was limited to reading the charges and saying whether he agreed or disagreed with them.

In this discussion, Comrade Moreno returned to his assessment of Comrade Sánchez: "You're a great leader with some weak points, like those that all the leaders of the Bloque had here." The accusation of racism, previously a "grave" charge, now becomes merely a weak point in a "great leader."

The transcript also includes a discussion on how to avoid giving the rank and file all the facts.

The May meeting of the Executive Committee had decided to suspend Comrade Sánchez for six months. However, he was granted a special status: he remained in the leadership of the Bolshevik Tendency, and was considered to be a "collaborator" with the central leadership of the PST and with the editorial board of the PST newspaper, *Revolución Socialista*.

At the September convention, there was a four-hour discussion among the delegates on whether to allow Comrade Sánchez to attend. A vote was taken to bar him from attending the convention, even though it was open to sympathizers.

As I said before, the bulk of the time of the September convention was taken up with this discussion about Comrade Sánchez, and the related point of the alleged existence of a secret faction that supposedly included Comrade Sánchez. It was Comrade Moreno who first raised the allegation concerning a secret faction in an Executive Committee meeting just prior to the convention. He charged Executive Committee members Comrades Socorro Ramírez and Gladys Jiménez with being part of it. Following the point about Comrade Sánchez at the convention, Comrade Moreno raised this charge again at the convention. He called for the formation of the "Pro-Bolshevization Tendency" to fight against comrades who were characterized as comrades who "refused to change themselves, for class reasons or inertia. . . ." (Appendix C.)

The evidence presented at the convention concerning a "secret faction" was based on the testimony of one witness, Comrade Olga Cifuentes. This witness has written a letter explaining how, as a very new member of the organization, she had been pushed to present testimony at a meeting of the Pro-Bolshevization Tendency. In her letter, Comrade Cifuentes denounces the methods used and denies the interpretation made by the leadership that her testimony proved the existence of a secret faction. (Appendix D.)

Comrade Camilo González, Political Secretary of the PST, was the comrade who, at the convention, presented

the testimony of Comrade Cifuentes as proof of the existence of a secret faction. Later, Comrade González made a self-criticism in the PST internal bulletin. (Appendix E.) He explains that he acted in a "light-minded and irresponsible way." He had "interpreted her remarks without having seriously discussed them with her."

Thus, the charge that a secret faction existed was proven to be unfounded.

Nevertheless, the campaign against comrades who had resisted the measures taken against Comrade Sánchez continued. The emphasis now was placed on their alleged petty-bourgeois class character. This is supposedly proved by their "denial of the basic principles of democratic centralism," by their "individualism" in relation to political work, and by their "conception of the party," which is different from that of the leadership. (Appendix F.)

The assertion that the opposition is "petty bourgeois" became a major aspect of the subsequent campaign against them, in spite of the fact that no programmatic differences have arisen or even been alleged. The term "petty bourgeois" is used as an epithet, and substituted for concrete charges.

While the leadership presented its version of the convention in a bulletin to the membership, including the above charges, the accused were not allowed to present their analysis of the convention or to reply to the charges leveled against them. They were prevented from publishing a counterreport in the bulletin. In addition, they were denied their right to present their position in party meetings held to discuss the balance sheet of the convention.

This is the product of a wrong conception of democratic centralism, a conception which is defended by the majority of the PST leadership and which is clearly expressed in a letter sent by the PST Executive Committee to the leadership of the Bogotá central zone on the case of Comrade Gladys Jiménez. This letter says:

"To say that the Executive Committee and other leadership bodies of the party function as a team and not as a sum of tendencies, factions, or brilliant personalities means that within this leadership team all the comrades have the right to discuss, to dissent, etc., but once a decision has been made by the majority this is the position of the leadership team, and in all the party bodies and in all the areas of the party where the leadership members have to carry out their tasks this is the position that they are going to express, that they are going to defend." (Quoted in the Activities Report by E. Barragan, Appendix G.)

A member of the leadership must defend the positions of the majority of the leadership in the internal debates inside the party. In this specific case, this meant that the accused comrades had to attack themselves instead of defending themselves in front of the party. Through this device, a de facto minority in the party can win a formal majority of the votes. This conception is alien to the principles of the Fourth International.

The December Central Committee Meeting

The Bureau of the United Secretariat decided to send me, Comrade Hansen, and Comrade Jaime to attend the December meeting of the Central Committee.

Two key reports were given at the Central Committee meeting: a report on activities by Comrade E. Barragan.

the organizational secretary of the PST, and a report by Comrade Greco, a member of the leadership of the Argentine PST and a central leader of the Bolshevik Tendency. (Appendices G and H.)

Let us first consider Comrade Greco's report, since in many ways it set the tone and political framework for the CC meeting. He began to develop the thesis that the dissolution of the IMT and the LTF is just a fake. It's not a dissolution, according to him, but a fusion between two factions seeking to maintain the leadership of the international and to hide each other's political bankruptcy. The aim of this unprincipled bloc is to destroy the real Trotskyist alternative leadership offered by the Bolshevik Tendency. The first target of this bloc is the Colombian PST. According to Comrade Greco, this was why a United Secretariat delegation had been sent to observe the Central Committee meeting.

In fact, Greco's report offered an explanation for the deepening of the crisis in the PST. In addition, it was designed to sow doubts about the reports made by me and Comrade Hansen concerning the situation in the international, since many of the facts given in our reports had not previously been known to the Central Committee as a whole, even though some of its members are members of the international leadership of the Bolshevik Tendency. For example, they had never before heard that the Portuguese PRT was facing a serious crisis, and that its members were discussing unification with the Portuguese LCI. They had thought that the Spanish LCR was a small group in crisis which had been reduced to a few hundred members, while the Bolshevik Tendency in Spain had prospects of quickly building a party of more than 1,500 and already had influence over thousands of activists.

The Greco report had another purpose. It sought to restore cohesion to the badly shaken majority leadership of the PST. Comrade Greco called for tight discipline in face of the alleged attack from the outside by the "IMT-LTF bloc." In fact, he tried to make out that a war was on between this supposed bloc and the Colombian PST, a war that justified the most exceptional internal measures.

Greco held that the criticisms made by us on the concept of democratic centralism held by the PST leadership and the practices it engaged in as a party regime were incorrect. He claimed that the concepts and practices of the United Secretariat were deviations introduced by the IMT-LTF unprincipled bloc.

Comrade Greco identified the PST itself with the Bolshevik Tendency, thus identifying a faction with the party. This point of view was expressed repeatedly at the Central Committee meeting. Linked with a call to "Bolshevize" the party, it provided the "theoretical" basis for the disciplinary measures to which Comrade Barragan devoted the main part of his report.

Comrade Barragan's report was entitled "activities report." He talked briefly about the election campaign and how the policy that the PST had been following was basically correct. He mentioned other aspects of the PST's work, and then underlined some of the problems with which the party had been confronted in the course of the election campaign. He said that the party faced two types of problems. First, there was a difficulty in carrying out both the electoral campaign and a financial campaign that had been decided on. Second, there was a lack of understanding among the rank and file on how to inte-

grate their daily mass work with the electoral campaign.

He then charged that certain comrades—Comrades Sánchez, Gladys Jiménez, Gustavo Vivas, and Ciro Roldan—were responsible for these difficulties.

This brings us to the main part of his report—charges against these comrades for their supposed factional activity, and the necessity of applying "Bolshevik" norms along the lines I have mentioned.

First on Ricardo Sánchez. His suspension for six months had come to an end. A decision had to be taken on the case. The behavior of Sánchez during his suspension was analyzed by Comrade Barragan. According to "memorandums written by various rank-and-file comrades, middle cadres," and another "from a CC member," things were clear: "The comrade has maintained his factional attitude and his disloyal behavior to the party." While suspended, "the comrade has continued to hide his real political positions from the party, although in private conversations he developed a systematic campaign against the leadership of the BT."

Comrade Sánchez is thus charged with being opposed to the leadership of the Bolshevik Tendency, which is once again equated with the PST.

Sánchez was also charged with not having built a support committee for the campaign, with not having convinced anyone to join the electoral slate, not having paid dues or participated in the financial campaign while under suspension. "The position of the comrade is a liquidationist one," concluded Comrade Barragan. Comrade Barragan also charged that Comrade Sánchez had participated in conferences and given speeches during the time he was under suspension without consulting the party leadership and asking its authorization. The positions Sánchez defended on the constituent assembly and on the "citizens strike" ("paro cívico") were, according to Barragan, not those of the party. Consequently, Sánchez had placed himself outside the party. The measure recommended was the transformation of the six-month suspension into an "indefinite suspension." This is a fancy formulation for expulsion.

It should be noted that Comrade Gladys Jiménez had signed the original resolution against Comrade Sánchez in May 1977. She presented the Executive Committee with a letter which repudiated her original support to this resolution. She asked that this letter be circulated inside the party, but this request was refused. (Appendix I.) This letter itself was not taken into consideration by the Central Committee when it considered the case.

Initially the leadership did not plan to allow Comrade Sánchez any opportunity to defend himself. It was only after a rather lengthy discussion involving the delegation of the United Secretariat that he was granted this right. As with the other comrades put on trial, he was allowed a few minutes to present his case.

Comrade Sánchez demonstrated that all the speeches he had given were in accordance with party rules, with the participation or sponsorship of the party organizations in all the towns in which he had spoken. He stressed the fact that at the time most of his speeches were given on the question of the constituent assembly, the party leadership had recognized that the party had no official, clearly crystallized position on this tactical question.

These arguments were not taken into consideration. On the contrary, a new charge was leveled against him during

the Central Committee meeting, that he had signed the platform of a new tendency, the Proletarian Democracy Tendency. His indefinite suspension was voted by a large majority of the Central Committee.

Another case was that of Comrade Gustavo Vivas, a member of the PST Executive Committee. This comrade was a "delegate" of the Bolshevik Tendency in Central America. His theater of action was Costa Rica and Panamá. At the Central Committee meeting immediately following the September convention, at which Comrade Alfonso Ríos of Mexico and I were present, Comrade Vivas said that after what he had seen at the convention he had lost moral confidence in the leadership of the PST. In view of this, he would prefer to remain in Bogotá and not return to Central America. The CC said that, although Vivas was a member of the Central Committee, it was impossible for the committee to make this decision; the matter had to be referred to the leadership of the Bolshevik Tendency, which would decide.

Later the BT leadership apparently agreed that he should remain in Bogotá. He was put in charge of coordinating the PST electoral campaign—not a small responsibility. But at the same time, a campaign was launched against him; it was said that he was just a petty-bourgeois nationalist. He was charged with having abandoned his post, abandoned internationalism. The charge was openly raised in an assembly of the Bogotá membership.

Just before the Central Committee meeting, in face of all these attacks, this comrade asked to resign from the Executive Committee. This was used as further proof against him.

After having asked the Executive Committee to accept his resignation, and while waiting for a response, he informed his cell of his request and explained his reasons. This move was considered to be a serious break with the norms of democratic centralism, according to the conception developed by the PST leadership. (Appendix J.)

In this same document, another accusation is made against Comrade Vivas. In his cell, he had expressed some disagreements with the official balance sheet drawn up by the leadership on the party's participation in the November 18 mobilization. It was said that as a member of the leadership, he should have defended the official party line in this rank-and-file body, reserving his criticisms only for the leading bodies.

The case of Comrade Gladys Jiménez was basically the same. She was also a member of the PST Executive Committee. Through a referendum of the Central Committee, taken a few weeks before the December Central Committee meeting, all her political rights were suspended and she was "separated" from the EC. This was done because she advanced a balance sheet of the September convention different from that of the official version. The same charge was made against Comrade Ciro.

During the CC meeting, two other comrades were disciplined: Socorro Ramírez and Jaime Galarza. Comrade Socorro Ramírez is the party's presidential candidate and the main public figure of the PST and Trotskyism in Colombia. In the text of the Barragan report, distributed just before the CC meeting, Comrade Socorro's name did not appear. The decision to discipline Comrade Socorro was taken the same day as the report was given. She was chairing that session of the CC meeting, and was informed of the case against her when Comrade Barragan added her

to the list during his oral report. The formal implementation of the decision to expel her was made by the Executive Committee shortly after the Central Committee meeting.

No specific charges were made against her. She was merely associated with the other comrades because she signed the call for a new tendency. (Appendix K.)

The case of Comrade Jaime, a member of the PST Central Committee and of the delegation sent by the United Secretariat, was not even mentioned in Comrade Barragan's oral report. Comrade Jaime learned that he was under charges during the final session of the CC, when the vote was taken on the disciplinary measures. Since he had just arrived in Colombia the day before the CC, having come from Europe, it was difficult to make a case against him. However, at the opening of the CC meeting, he added his name to the declaration of the Proletarian Democracy Tendency. (Appendix L.) The only basis for his "suspension" was the fact that he signed this tendency declaration. It should be added that he was informed of the charges only a few minutes before he was granted five or ten minutes to present his case. (Appendix M.)

The first four of these six cases constituted the main points of the Barragan report, the "activities" report to the PST CC. Together with the last two cases, they constituted the central point of discussion and debate at this Central Committee meeting.

These six comrades have addressed an appeal to the United Secretariat, which is in your hands. (Appendix N.)

The Central Committee passed a motion prohibiting the formation of the Proletarian Democracy Tendency and any other tendency or faction at this time. (Appendix O.) As we have seen, one of the charges against Comrade Jaime was that he signed the call for the formation of the Proletarian Democracy Tendency. In giving reasons for "separating" the six comrades from the PST, the majority of the CC included the charge of their having called for the formation of the Proletarian Democracy Tendency.

The motion itself banning the formation of tendencies or factions is in violation of the statutes of the Fourth International. While the leadership has the right to regulate the internal life of the party, including the form and course of the internal debate, the right to form tendencies or factions is unconditional.

At the September convention of the PST, comrades were charged with having formed a secret faction. At the December meeting of the Central Committee they and others were finally condemned and expelled because they had written and openly presented the platform of a tendency.

One of the key points made by the comrades of the Proletarian Democracy Tendency was that the organization is confronted with a crisis. The majority of the CC now recognizes that this is so. The comrades of the Proletarian Democracy Tendency presented the only possible way to resolve this crisis, especially since it relates to the internal regime of the party. They said that the crisis could be resolved only by a special convention preceded by a democratic discussion.

The majority of the CC recognized that a crisis existed, but argued that calling such a convention would cut across the election campaign. Using this kind of reasoning, the tendency's request was presented as further proof that these comrades wanted to destroy the party, not only by

violating democratic centralism, but also by destroying the election campaign. So the request for the special convention was refused.

The arguments developed by the tendency, and by the United Secretariat delegation, since we took the floor on this question, were the reverse. There is a deep crisis in the party, we said, which you now acknowledge. It revolves around the key issue of the party's internal regime. The only way to ensure that such a crisis does the least possible harm to the electoral campaign is to open a debate in the party leading to a special convention in early March, immediately following the first stage of the campaign (after the local parliamentary elections, when a break of a few weeks occurs before the presidential campaign begins). That was the "plot" mounted against the PST by the Proletarian Democracy Tendency in alliance with the representatives of the United Secretariat.

Following the Central Committee meeting, supporters of the Proletarian Democracy Tendency requested that the leadership take a poll of the membership on whether or not to convene a special convention of the PST in March. (Appendix P.) This was done in accordance with the statutes of the PST, which state: "A special convention of the party can be called at any time by one-third (1/3) of the rank-and-file members or cells, by one-third of the Central Committee (1/3), or by a majority of the Executive Committee. It cannot be held less than one (1) month after the time it is called."

When it became evident that a growing number of rank-and-file comrades supported the holding of a special convention, the PST Executive Committee violated the PST statutes. In a resolution dated January 5, 1978 (Appendix Q), the leadership claimed that the September 1977 PST convention had already called for a special convention for August 1978, just after the presidential elections. Since a special convention had already been called, this call for a March convention was rejected.

The aim of the January 5, 1978, Executive Committee resolution is indicated by the following section:

"c. That there is no provision for any referendum with respect to the date of a special congress, as cited above, in any body of the party.

"d. That all full and probationary members must uphold this resolution, beginning to engage immediately in the electoral activities of their region and in the tasks associated with it.

"e. That whoever does not uphold it places himself outside the PST and his separation from the party will be made official immediately."

The purpose of this resolution was clear: to justify the expulsion of any comrade who took a stand in favor of a special convention. This in fact is what has happened.

The United Secretariat has received a petition signed by more than 315 comrades—full and probationary members—calling for a special convention. (Appendix R.) The comrades who signed this appeal have already been expelled, or are in process of being expelled. All indications are that they constitute a majority of the party. (At the September convention, the delegates represented 385 full members, according to the credentials committee report approved by the convention. The number of probationary members was not clearly stated in that report.) They certainly constitute more than one-third of the party membership.

With the exception of Bogotá, the tendency supporters are in the majority in every city where the party is located. The majority of members in these units have therefore been expelled.

The January 25, 1978, letter from the PST leadership to the United Secretariat (Appendix S), which has been mimeographed and which you have, raises points about two individuals, Umberto Valverde and Jorge Posada. The case of Jorge Posada involves the question of Editorial Pluma. This publishing house is a strictly commercial enterprise, which has nothing to do with the Fourth International. The United Secretariat should make this clear; there is a motion before you to this effect. (Appendix T.) Umberto Valverde is a writer and columnist in Colombia. He is not a member of the PST or the Fourth International. He had a relation with the top leadership of the Bolshevik Tendency for a time, and worked on *Revista de América*. The materials relating to this affair are not available at this meeting of the United Secretariat, and therefore we cannot take a position at this time.

Grave Consequences

Just prior to the Central Committee meeting, the United Secretariat delegation observed the very successful national "Workers and Socialist Unity Conference" which nominated Comrade Socorro as its presidential candidate.

This national "Workers and Socialist Unity Conference" was of great political significance to Colombian Trotskyism, and this should be taken into account in estimating the extent of the damage done by the actions of the PST leadership. The conference marked the culmination of the first stage of the electoral campaign. Here are some figures from the initial balance sheet of that first stage. About 60,000 people participated in the previous six weeks in meetings that featured Comrade Socorro Ramírez and other candidates. These rallies were attended by as many as 2,000 or 3,000 people, and in one case 5,000. At the convention the main centrist organization of Colombia, the Unión Revolucionaria Socialista (URS—Revolutionary Socialist Union), joined the campaign.

One conclusion was clear to everyone. The electoral campaign launched by the PST, which was backed by the LCR (Liga Comunista Revolucionaria—Revolutionary Communist League—the other Fourth International group in Colombia) after its October convention and later by the Organización Comunista Ruptura (OCR—Breakaway Communist Organization), a centrist organization moving towards Trotskyism, and finally by the URS, had succeeded in bringing together all the significant Trotskyist and centrist forces in Colombia, basically along the lines and framework established by the Trotskyists.

At this point, we thought that a major political victory of this kind could bring about a change in the relationship of forces in the left by the end of the campaign. But the letter addressed to the United Secretariat by Comrade Socorro Ramírez, the "suspended" presidential candidate, gives a clear picture of the damage that has now been done to this perspective. (Appendix U.) Not only has the campaign been harmed by the general paralysis of the PST caused by the expulsions; it has also been jeopardized by the maneuvers of the PST leadership, which is attempting to use the other participating organizations to settle accounts with its opponents within the PST. The document on the

campaign sent to the United Secretariat by the Colombian LCR (Appendix V) also provides clear evidence of this and corroborates the letter from Comrade Socorro.

I want to stress one political aspect. The campaign until recently was projected as involving socialists and workers directly through assemblies such as the national "Workers and Socialist Unity Conference."

For factional reasons and without a single word of discussion, the PST leadership has totally reversed this entire conception overnight. Because a majority of the candidates nominated by the "Workers and Socialist Unity Conference" belong to or support the opposition within the PST, the PST leadership now proposes that candidates be ratified or nominated by the party leadership on the basis of a discussion with the leaderships of the other organizations. The votes of the thousands of militants who had participated in this process are disregarded. The result can only be the repulsion of many militants originally attracted to the campaign.

The PST leadership's course of action also has negative repercussions on the process of unification of the Trotskyist forces in Colombia. The conception put forward at the Central Committee meeting of a party totally identified with a faction presents a clear obstacle to unification. In view of this conception and the way in which it has been put into practice, it is difficult to take at face value the resolutions adopted by the PST leadership stating that they still favor unification with the LCR.

The concerns of the LCR leadership about the future of the unification process are expressed in their document mentioned above. However, they continue to see this process as a central part of their activity and are trying to maintain the national parity committee set up to implement the unification process. This parity committee has been virtually paralyzed by the PST leadership's attempt to use it against the comrades of the Proletarian Demo-

cracy Tendency. The situation is even more confused at the regional level, where, unlike in Bogotá, the majority of the PST members support the Proletarian Democracy Tendency. The PST leadership denies that these comrades are members of the party and consequently accuses the LCR comrades in the local areas of working with members of another party in a factional manner.

The totality of the undemocratic actions of the majority of the Central Committee plays into the hands of the opponents of Trotskyism in Colombia, who are utilizing them to discredit our position in defense of workers democracy, a position which correctly had been one of the themes of the PST election campaign.

Obviously the future of the PST as a unified organization is at stake. The comrades of the Proletarian Democracy Tendency have made defense of the party's unity a central plank of their platform and have called for a special convention preceded by a democratic discussion as the only way to maintain this unity. Through its refusal to organize such a convention, its factional attitudes, and the massive wave of suspensions and expulsions, the PST leadership is in fact destroying the unity of the party. If it is not brought to a halt, the consequences of such a course will be disastrous for the PST, for the unity and reputation of Colombian Trotskyism, and for the future growth of our forces in that country.

The resolution you have before you (Appendix T) centers on the two questions which the United Secretariat should take a stand on at this time. The first is the violation of the statutes of the Fourth International committed by the majority of the Central Committee in its motion banning the formation of tendencies or factions. The second is the violation of the statutes of the Colombian PST in the leadership's rejection of the request by over one-third of the membership for a special convention.

Motions on Colombia Passed at January 1978 United Secretariat Meeting

Motion by Riel: to adopt the following resolution on the crisis in the Colombian PST:

A communication dated January 20, 1978, was received by the United Secretariat from leading members of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST) of Colombia who formed the Proletarian Democracy Tendency. The communication appeals the disciplinary measures consisting of both temporary and permanent expulsions (suspensions, "separation from the party," etc.) taken against them by the majority of the Central Committee essentially for having called for the formation of a tendency and for having demanded a special convention to consider what to do about the crisis that threatened to split the party.

After hearing the reports of the comrades designated by the United Secretariat to attend the Central Committee and help the process of unification in Colombia, after studying the documentation, and after discussing the crisis in the PST and its ramifications, the United Secretariat reached the following conclusions:

1. In their decision of December 10, 11, 12, 1977, banning tendencies and factions, the majority of the Central Committee of the PST violated the provisions in the

statutes of the Fourth International upholding internal democracy.

("The CC does not authorize the formation of the Proletarian Democracy Tendency or any other tendency or faction before the next pre-convention period after the presidential elections of 1978.")

The statutes read as follows on this point: (Section VII, Point 29, Letter g.)

"g. Decisions are reached by majority vote. Minorities are duty bound to carry out majority decisions. Minorities, however, have the incontestable right to constitute themselves into tendencies or factions on the basis of a stated platform and to enjoy democratic rights such as:

"To present their views to the membership of their national section during the preparatory discussion period before national congresses.

"To present their views to the membership of the International through the Internal Bulletin during the pre-Congress discussion period.

"To be represented in the leading bodies with due consideration to their political and numerical importance. This does not mean that every minority, no matter how

small, is entitled to representation on a leading body. Nor does it mean proportional representation for minorities. The Fourth International abides by majority rule and this includes the right of the majority to assure itself a working majority when sharp differences are involved. But it is also the duty of the majority to safeguard the rights of the minority and this means that a minority is not to be penalized for holding a minority position."

(This refers to the right to form tendencies and factions and not the form of the debate, which remains the responsibility of the leadership.)

It should be observed that the majority of the Central Committee of the PST compounded their violation of the statutes of the Fourth International by banning only one tendency, the one formed by comrades critical of the practices of the majority of the Central Committee. For themselves, the majority of the Central Committee use a formation of their own, the Bolshevik Tendency, to promulgate their views.

2. In rejecting the call of the Proletarian Democracy Tendency for a special convention, the majority of the Central Committee also violated the provisions of the statutes of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores. The statutes read as follows on this point:

"A special convention of the party can be called at any time by one-third (1/3) of the rank-and-file members or cells, by one-third of the Central Committee (1/3), or by a majority of the Executive Committee. It cannot be held less than one (1) month after the time it is called."

This provision of the statutes has been met.

Citing association with the call for a special convention and adherence to the Proletarian Democracy Tendency as grounds for expulsion (other grounds were also cited—all of them of a flimsy or dubious nature), the majority of the Central Committee launched a purge that may well involve a majority of the ranks of the party.

The violation of internal democracy committed by the majority of the Central Committee has done serious damage to the PST and threatens to lead to still worse consequences.

The "separation" of Comrade Socorro Ramírez from the PST was a heavy blow to her presidential candidacy and to the entire electoral campaign of the PST and the Unidad Obrera y Socialista. News of the expulsion, as was to be expected, spread rapidly throughout Colombia, creating a first-rate political scandal, much to the delight of the enemies of Trotskyism.

The purge of the party involving hundreds of members, provided fresh bits of scandal for the use of enemies of Trotskyism.

The antidemocratic actions of the majority of the Central Committee set up fresh barriers to the unification of Trotskyist forces in Colombia (organized in the PST and the Liga Comunista Revolucionaria) and greatly lessened the attractiveness of the Trotskyist movement as a whole among the left. The old myth about Trotskyism being the same thing as Stalinism was given fresh currency.

Worst of all has been the effect on the party of the course followed by the majority of the Central Committee. Their

antidemocratic procedures have led to the destruction of cadres and now threaten to shatter the PST.

The Central Committee acts under the control of the top leadership of the Bolshevik Tendency, which intervenes directly in the decision-making process. Thus, the top leadership of this international faction bears responsibility for the acute crisis of the Colombian PST.

In view of the above facts and the refusal of the majority of the CC to abide by the statutes, the United Secretariat recognizes the validity of the appeal of the Proletarian Democracy Tendency. The positions taken by this tendency, it should be added, are in accordance with the principles of the Fourth International. This is clearly shown by the tendency's programmatic declarations and course of action.

The United Secretariat strongly urges the majority of the Central Committee to end its violations of the statutes of the Fourth International and the PST by withdrawing the disciplinary measures taken against members of the Proletarian Democracy Tendency, restoring them forthwith to their positions in the party, and holding the special convention called for by more than one-third of the membership of the PST.

Vote on the above motion:

For: 22 (Adair, Aubin, Brewster, Claudio, Dunder, Duret, Enrique, Fourier, Frej, Georges, Holden, Marline, Otto, Pepe, Petersen, Riel, Roman, Stateman, Susan, Sylvain, Thérèse, Walter)

Against: 0

Abstaining: 0

Not voting: 0

Motion by Riel: The United Secretariat has been informed of the grave crisis that Editorial Pluma is now experiencing and of the many consequences that it has already had, particularly in Colombia.

1. The United Secretariat reaffirms the principle of the necessary separation between any autonomous commercial enterprise and the political organization.

2. The United Secretariat specifies that, on the basis of this traditional criterion, Editorial Pluma, which is a strictly autonomous commercial enterprise, has never been dependent on any body of the Fourth International nor is it linked to it in any way whatsoever. Moreover, no organism of the Fourth International has ever discussed or been consulted on the activities of Pluma.

3. As a result, the name and the authority of the Fourth International or any of its bodies cannot be invoked or used in relation to the present crisis of Pluma and its implications on all levels.

Vote on the above motion:

For: 22 (Adair, Aubin, Brewster, Claudio, Dunder, Duret, Enrique, Fourier, Frej, Georges, Holden, Marline, Otto, Pepe, Petersen, Riel, Roman, Stateman, Susan, Sylvain, Thérèse, Walter)

Against: 0

Abstaining: 0

Not voting: 0

APPENDIX A

May 1977 Letter to the Executive Committee of the Socialist Bloc

By Nahuel Moreno

To the Executive Committee of the Socialist Bloc

Dear Comrades,

By chance, thanks to Comrade Gladys, the personal accusation directed against me by Comrade Ricardo has come to my attention. This has led me to analyze and evaluate both Comrade Ricardo's and my own conduct in relation to the Socialist Bloc. Only one conclusion can be drawn from this analysis, which I have already formulated orally to the leadership and which I would now like to express in writing: Comrade Ricardo is disloyal, dishonest, and factional toward the Socialist Bloc, and I have been and continue to be loyal and honest with your organization.

With the arrival of Comrade Ricardo, the moment has come for him to be informed of my conclusions by reading this letter, and for the Executive Committee, the Central Committee, and the entire Socialist Bloc to judge our respective behavior by adopting an emphatic and categorical resolution that puts each one in his place. All the more so since my conclusions have been reinforced and, even more important, concretely corroborated in the past few days by the series of quotations brought by Comrade Gladys, which are taken from her private correspondence with Comrade Ricardo.

I. A Tendency Fight That Has Ended for Everyone But Comrade Ricardo, Who Continues Secretly to Carry It On

A. Last year, one week after my arrival in Bogotá, a sharp tendency fight began around a clear political program: immediate adherence to the Fourth International and participation in the formation of the Bolshevik Tendency. After two or three weeks of an intense fight, comrades Camilo, Kemel, and Darío, who were part of the group that opposed our program and against whom we waged our tendency fight, joined our tendency. This occurred a few days before the June 1976 Central Committee meeting.

The Central Committee ratified the dissolution of tendencies and declared that the tendency fight had been overcome; it unanimously voted in favor of joining the Fourth International and entering into the process of forming the Bolshevik Tendency. From that point on the tendencies inside the party were dissolved, and it was made clear on our part that we would no longer hold tendency meetings and that our only bodies for hammering out and executing decisions would be those of the Socialist Bloc.

It's true that informal meetings were held by the founders of our tendency a few days after that Central Committee meeting. This is a contradiction that came about as part of the process of dissolving the tendency; that is, these were the final meetings and they were held in order

to put an end to all groupings or tendencies within the party. The dissolution of tendencies was so clear that in calling these meetings the three members of the leadership who had opposed our tendency were informed. We asked them to make allowances and to authorize these meetings.

In doing this, we were simply following the Bolshevik tradition that tendency fights are always carried out in the open, in a public manner in the organization around an explicit and clear-cut political program. When the entire organization is won over to this program, tendencies are dissolved. Anyone who continues to fight against a given group of comrades without a program and behind the backs of the ranks and leadership bodies is a factionalist. Because if that person doesn't put forward a program known to the entire party and wage a fight with the objective of winning the entire organization over to his positions, his fight can only be understood as a personal struggle motivated by hate and love whose aim is to win a personal victory and not to win people to a political position. This is the attitude of someone who loves himself and his group more than he loves the party, of someone who prefers the success of prestige and leadership posts rather than successes in educating the ranks and building the party.

Despite the fact that these were the policies and methods of our former tendency and of the leadership bodies of our party, Comrade Ricardo continued to act as if the tendencies had not dissolved. And even worse, he tended to transform . . . [A few lines of text are missing—Translator.]

1) At meetings preceding the Central Committee meeting, held only a few days before comrades Camilo, Kemel, and Darío joined the tendency and when our victory was already assured, Comrade Ricardo argued that these comrades should be kept off the Executive Committee, thus transforming the tendency fight into a fight for posts and of organizational reprisals. This position was defeated; all the other members of the leadership of our tendency opposed it.

2) Comrade Ricardo opposed the motion that Comrade Camilo be named political secretary and that he be responsible for the newspaper. The purpose of the motion was to show the entire party that we weren't fighting over posts, but instead exclusively over political positions, and that full account should be taken of the individual capacities of each comrade when giving out leadership positions and responsibilities, as opposed to taking into account the political position and tendency that each had defended.

3) Comrade Ricardo categorically refused to agree to add comrades Jaime and Edgar to the Executive Committee, arguing that they were weak and had petty-bourgeois traits which tended to make them give in to Comrade Camilo. A strong intervention carried out personally by Comrade Eduardo, through conversations to which I was not a witness, made Ricardo change his position and, at

the last minute, when the CC had already begun, he agreed to these comrades being added to the Executive Committee.

C. During the June Central Committee Meeting

1) During the CC meeting, despite the fact that the tendency fight had ended, Comrade Ricardo launched a ferocious attack against comrades Camilo and Kemel, basing himself on their personal and political histories. He tried to prove that there had been a struggle within the Bloc in which he had always been right and Camilo-Kemel had always been wrong and were, in reality, against the party's development. He defended an interpretation of the Bloc's history constructed from a personal point of view in which the key role of the city of Cali and Comrade Jaime didn't figure. When a tendency fight has ended, such a tactic of harking back to the past in order to embarrass the opposition and red-bait them is typically factional.

2) Despite our warnings that we would not allow any calls for Moscow trial-type self-criticisms, on the second day of the Central Committee meeting Comrade Ricardo imposed such self-criticisms in an indirect way. To do this, he refused to accept an immediate vote on who would be the political secretary of the Bloc, insisting that before the vote there be a sort of oral referendum for two hours, during which all CC members would have to state their opinion of the qualities and trajectory of comrades Ricardo and Camilo.

3) All this had one clear purpose: to make it difficult, nearly impossible, to integrate and work with comrades Camilo, Kemel, and Darío, despite the fact that politically total programmatic unity had been achieved.

Our attitude was the diametric opposite. At that time, we had a very bad personal opinion of Comrade Camilo. An opinion which Comrade Mercedes knew how to caricature very well through an expression she used in her private correspondence (which was her perfect right) and in official correspondence (which was an error on her part). Despite this bad opinion, we acted in a manner different than Comrade Ricardo. For the good of the party, we tried to achieve the best atmosphere for working with all the comrades. In this way we carried out Bolshevik methods to the fullest—that is, when a political struggle ends or is recognized as having ended, the ex-majority has more obligations than the ex-minority because it must terminate the struggle in practice once and for all by eliminating all obstacles standing in the way of collaborating in common work with those who had been in the minority, including around the history of the fight, thereby achieving a climate that enables them to be integrated into a fraternal and homogeneous team that is based on the political agreements that have been reached and on the comrades' capacities.

4) Despite the fact that the Central Committee declared itself against personal or group accumulation of leadership positions, pointing out that each leader should have only one task and one post, Comrade Ricardo hoarded three leadership positions: political secretary of the Bloc, secretary of the tendency, and director of *Revista de América*. With regard to the latter, he fiercely refused to allow Comrade Jaime to assume it, disqualifying him for having petty-bourgeois traits, for weakness in the face of Comrade Camilo, and for his lack of prestige, making it a

question of principle that he himself be named to the post.

D. After the June Central Committee Meeting

1) Comrade Ricardo didn't accept my strong criticisms of the way he had acted at the Central Committee meeting. Nevertheless, in an honorable gesture, he authorized myself and Comrade Gladys to state our criticisms and characterization of the Central Committee meeting at the first leadership meeting that took up the question. The full value of this gesture on the part of Comrade Ricardo can be measured if account is taken of the fact that I don't remember ever having attended a similar meeting in which, through fierce ideological terrorism, comrades were forced to take a position concerning comrades Camilo and Ricardo in what was in reality not a vote but a trial.

2) Immediately after the June CC meeting, Comrade Ricardo devoted himself to the savage persecution of comrades Camilo, Kemel, and Darío in the Executive Committee, Laura on the editorial staff of the newspaper, and other comrades whom he considered to be part of Camilo's group. This persecution was nurtured by all kinds of characterizations, epithets, and insults, deepening instead of diminishing differences of all kinds. (In one meeting of the editorial staff as many as seven insulting characterizations were directed against Comrade Laura.)

Comrade Ricardo's ferocious campaign provoked a reaction on the part of various outstanding leaders and founders of our tendency such as comrades Jaime and Socorro. They argued that it was necessary to check Comrade Ricardo's aggressions and provocations against Camilo's friends. It was necessary to take a clear position: If what Comrade Ricardo claimed was true, an intransigent struggle should be launched to get Camilo and his friends out of the party, a clear fight known to all the ranks without any maneuvering. But if this wasn't the case, if they weren't enemies of the party, if we weren't dealing with a petty-bourgeois tendency, if Comrade Ricardo's accusations and epithets were unjustified, then it was necessary to put an end to these attacks against Camilo and his friends in all the meetings they attended.

Other founding members of the tendency, including myself, held another position. We considered that organizational changes coupled with Comrade Ricardo's going to Europe would transform him, making him abandon his cliquist-type positions, his ideological terrorism, and making him give in to the efforts and the conception put forward by the comrades who made the previous proposal.

3) A few months ago I was informed by way of Comrade Laura that the party was on the verge of a split as a result of these attacks by Comrade Ricardo. At one point, comrades who were friends of Camilo and who had been systematically assaulted, declared: "How long are we going to accept being subjected to insults, daily attacks, and demands for self-criticism?" It was only thanks to Comrade Camilo, who convinced them to hang on and wait for the party to develop, that the unity of the Bloc was saved.

E. In Europe

Everything I have previously stated can be fully corroborated, since there are many direct and indirect witnesses on the Executive Committee who can prove that I've stuck

strictly to the truth. But beginning from when Comrade Ricardo left for Europe, it is impossible to find witnesses to the events. This is not my fault, since given his factional traits and foreseeing a possible maneuver on his part, I always attempted, for the four meetings I held with Comrade Ricardo, to have witnesses to our conversations. I proposed to Comrade Ricardo that we speak in the presence of Mario Doglio, Antonio, and other Argentine, European, and Colombian comrades, or whomever else he wished. But Comrade Ricardo always managed to arrange for the meetings to be fully and totally secret, never in front of witnesses. Therefore, I must make it clear that, unlike the previous point, I cannot present exhaustive proof of my version of the events. Since there are differences between my version and that of Comrade Ricardo, above all concerning two important points which I'll go into later, the comrades of the Bloc should use one overall criterion for judging them: compare the respective histories and methods in our relations with the party on the basis of events that can be proved, and deduce from that which of the two versions is consistent with these differing and opposed relations that we have maintained with the party, taken as a whole.

1) During my stay in Paris in October, I spoke with Comrade Ricardo three times. Twice immediately after my arrival, and the third time for five or ten minutes just before I left, as I was on my way to the airport.

In the *first discussion*, I informed Comrade Ricardo of the following:

A group of his friends had met with me and we had an idea of how to put an end to the faction fighting and completely unite the party. For this purpose, it was necessary to designate comrades for the various vacant leadership responsibilities and to introduce a series of changes in the party leadership. First, to promote Camilo as political secretary, taking into account that both he and Comrade Kemel had totally collaborated with the leadership without any factional maneuvering. Furthermore, Camilo had played an important role, particularly in the editorial board of the newspaper, where he built an efficient editorial staff and a team with good internal relations publishing the best paper the Bloc ever had. Second, Comrade Eduardo, who had implemented and been in the vanguard of the big organizational changes that had led the Bloc to make a spectacular leap forward, should incontestably be elected the party's general secretary. Third, if Comrade Camilo were to leave the paper, we had to see who should replace him in this task, and we had to choose between comrades Edgar and Andrés. Fourth, comrades Kemel and Gladys should be promoted to the secretariat, especially Gladys, who was showing herself to be more and more competent and able. Fifth, Comrade Mono Valencia should be brought in immediately to reinforce the center.

Furthermore, I informed Ricardo that in the informal meetings with his friends (about which Comrade Camilo had been fully informed, which I didn't tell Ricardo), we thought that Comrade Ricardo himself should make these proposals to the Bloc in a historic letter, the significance of which would give Comrade Ricardo enormous prestige. Precisely because Comrade Ricardo had been the public leader of the tendency struggle and these decisions would result in solidly unifying the Bloc, confirming the changes and the organizational progress, and would demonstrate

that all the remnants of the tendency fight had been overcome.

At the same time, I informed Comrade Ricardo that a serious problem had been created when Eduardo and Gladys remained in a minority when they proposed a series of organizational measures necessary for securing the progress of the Bloc. Comrades Gustavo, Camilo, Socorro, and Kemel partially objected to these measures and thus paralyzed or delayed the necessary organizational transformation. We told these comrades that we were going to launch a hard fight on this problem, but with absolutely fraternal methods, since we didn't think that basic differences existed. We had proposed that, if they continued resisting the implementation of these measures, we would have to undergo two organizational experiences, theirs and ours, so that practice could decide.

Finally, I told Comrade Ricardo that this problem had been solved in an immensely positive way after a week of heated discussions in the leadership, and that the organizational question had been dealt with on the basis of unanimous agreement of all the members of the Executive Committee. In my opinion, this proved that we had increasingly the same methods, which enabled us to solve everything through discussion—sharp, as is usual for all Bolshevik leaderships—and that it was therefore more than ever necessary to unify the party and there wasn't the slightest reason for any tendency fight.

Comrade Ricardo listened very attentively to my report, and said he'd think it over and give me an answer next time we met.

At the *second meeting*, which I think took place one or two days later, Comrade Ricardo gave me the following answer:

After studying them carefully, he was in total disagreement with my proposals and with my opinion that the tendency fight was over, and he thought that my report on organizational problems had confirmed his view that comrades Camilo and Kemel were irredeemable, and I naively, for lack of information . . . [Text missing] . . . to exclude Camilo from the secretariat. To do this, it was necessary to carry out the following maneuver: eliminate Camilo from the editorial board of the newspaper, replacing him with Comrade Edgar, and leaving him without any concrete leadership tasks, which would justify his elimination from the secretariat.

Concerning Comrade Gladys, she could in no way be put on the secretariat since she was on the Executive Committee because of a maneuver he had pulled, but he was compelled to point out—since it was of service to the party and even though Gladys was an excellent comrade to whom he was linked by very deep emotional and intimate ties of all types—that she was not very capable, was dependent on him, was on a low theoretical and political level, and her organizational capacities were questionable. As for Comrade Eduardo, he was equally opposed to designating him as general secretary, since he considered him efficient in accomplishing organizational tasks, but completely incapable from the political point of view.

Comrade Ricardo proposed to me that everything remain the same until he returned, except for replacing Camilo with Edgar as editor of the newspaper; consequently, Camilo should be out of the secretariat as a preliminary step in the fight he would launch against them on his return to exclude them from the Executive Committee. He

added that when he returned he would like to have a fourth post—along with political secretary, secretary of the tendency, and editor of *Revista de América*—he wanted to be general secretary. Comrade Eduardo should remain organizational secretary and he should assume the other two secretaryships, since he thought there were no other comrades able to carry out these tasks.

There's some truth in Comrade Ricardo's version, but he doesn't make it clear that he deals only with the second meeting, completely overlooking the first one. Actually, I told the comrade that I agreed with him and I would do all I could to operate in the most loyal way, since he had convinced me that Camilo and Kemel were irredeemable. All this can be explained.

I was astonished by Comrade Ricardo's explanation. It never occurred to me that he wouldn't agree to send a letter of the type we suggested, which would enable him to emerge as an incontestable leader above all the other comrades by proposing changes so favorable to the party—changes which would have promoted deserving comrades like Camilo and basically Eduardo and Gladys and which would characterize him as the champion of the unity of the Socialist Bloc. I was greatly astonished that he was against comrades like Gladys and Eduardo, who were his intimate friends and quite able to fulfill these tasks.

However, I was also astonished from the psychological point of view to realize that Comrade Ricardo considered me a tool and proposed a maneuver to me to prevent Comrade Gladys from becoming a member of the secretariat and Comrade Eduardo from becoming general secretary and, even more serious, to exclude comrades Camilo and Kemel from the Executive Committee. I decided to remain silent and to approve.

There was a certain element of naiveté on Comrade Ricardo's part, but I was sincerely both offended and embarrassed to see how he sought to use me for his factional whims.

I acknowledge that I was shocked, and began to consider Comrade Ricardo from a different angle. Until then, I had seen him as a comrade with big defects as a result of the history of the Bloc itself. But beginning then, I began to be worried and thought the comrade couldn't be changed. I decided to let him go ahead with this, while I thought over his positions. I began by telling him that everything was okay, that I would faithfully transmit his opinions, that I would be loyal to him. I might have also said, although I don't remember very well, that I agreed to continue the struggle against Camilo and that the best way to do this was precisely to elect him political secretary. If I said this, it was a mistake on my part, but it occurred in a situation of confusion and when my attitude was to let Ricardo go ahead. I still don't know whether I acted correctly or incorrectly. I am sure that I have been loyal to the Bloc, although I began to be disloyal to this comrade.

I then asked the comrade to prepare a document for the Central Committee to explain his position and to have a third meeting with witnesses. I began to demand to have witnesses.

Comrade Ricardo postponed the letter and the third meeting until the last minute, when I was about to leave. Maybe there was a fourth meeting of one or two minutes to give me the letter, but the important meeting was the previous one.

Comrade Ricardo's letter disappointed me completely, since it didn't say anything about what he had said to me and he never sent the comrades any other letters. It seemed to me to be a factional letter, egocentric, which didn't recognize the full scope of the big progress the Bloc had made. I also had the impression . . . [text missing] . . . regional of Comrade Gladys, a nice letter which the comrade didn't mention. On the contrary, he tried to prove that he had been the leader on the organizational question without pointing out that in reality the biggest credit for having elaborated the general programmatic orientation basically belonged to Comrade Eduardo and myself. I really considered this a strange letter, one that gave the impression that it was sent from a titanic leader to his small, incompetent disciples. Anyway, when the comrade asked for my opinion, I answered, with the same approach of letting him go ahead, that it was good, that if this was his opinion, OK. In spite of my insistence that the *third meeting* take place with witnesses (several comrades were seeing me off), Comrade Ricardo refused to speak to me except in private, although I told him that we should talk in front of them. He took me to a room and we talked for around five minutes. He repeated that he'd thought the problem over and the best solution was not to replace Camilo with Edgar on the newspaper, to leave everything the way it was until he came back, and especially that he not be divested of any of his posts so that he could be both the general secretary and the political secretary. He asked me whether I agreed and I answered yes, that I would transmit his positions, that I had no objections to his positions, that I would listen to the opinions of Gladys, Eduardo, Socorro, and Gustavo and I wouldn't do anything independently of them, and that, since he had a lot of weight in the Bloc, it was possible that they would accept his position not to change anybody, to retain him in all his leadership posts, and also to elect him general secretary when he came back.

F. Return to Colombia

When I returned from France, I met separately—and not as a group or anything like that—with comrades Gustavo, Socorro, Gladys, and Eduardo. I informed them of Comrade Ricardo's position and of his letter, without any characterization, attack, or comment, in spite of the very bad opinion I had of both.

Later, during the Central Committee meeting when Comrade Gladys and other comrades approached me to let me know they considered the letter appalling, for the first time and in replying to these comments I told them that I shared their opinion and that it wasn't a letter, but an epistle.

I took the same attitude in speaking with comrades. I presented the position and arguments of Comrade Ricardo and I asked them what they thought. The answer was unanimous: all judged that the changes were indispensable, corresponded to the deepest needs of the party, and that if Comrade Ricardo couldn't understand this, so much the worse for him. This answer by the comrades led to my staying in Colombia, since if the comrades had supported Comrade Ricardo, the entire PST, which was informed about this, would have immediately left Colombia. Only then did I totally agree with the changes and I supported the comrades. They asked me to introduce the proposal for

changes at the CC and to explain their nature (what is a general secretary, what is an organization secretary, etc.). There were two parts to my report. The first part was done in my own name, since I never asked the Executive Committee to share my criticisms on this, and dealt with my evaluation of the previous Central Committee. The second part was an official report on the changes the Executive Committee considered worthwhile to introduce.

II. Comrade Ricardo's Systematic Disloyalty Toward the Socialist Bloc and Its Leadership

A. The Differences With Comrade Ricardo's Version

In his letters to Comrade Gladys, Comrade Ricardo gives a totally different version of the facts. The two most important points of divergence are the following: first, the comrade insinuates that I took the initiative in proposing a maneuver against Comrade Camilo, basing it on the fact that the factional fight was continuing on a more "ferocious" level than ever before; second, that I spoke with him in a personal capacity and not on behalf of several of his friends.

Since unfortunately there are no witnesses to our conversations, let's accept Comrade Ricardo's point of view. Let's suppose that I individually took the initiative in the struggle against Camilo, in the maneuver to eliminate him from the newspaper in order to deprive him of any influence, in the plan to organizationally liquidate comrades Camilo and Kemel, and let's suppose that Comrade Ricardo and I were in total agreement on this question. This would not mean that Comrade Ricardo is not a hardened factionalist, but that he still is—more than ever before—with the added fact that I'm a factionalist, too. That is to say that Ricardo and Moreno, or Moreno and Ricardo (no matter who took the initiative), are two people who are completely disloyal to the party, since we're maneuvering against Camilo behind the back of the organization, we reach a secret agreement between us, and we consider that a "ferocious" tendency "struggle" is continuing, but we don't inform the Bloc or its leadership.

If this isn't true, why didn't Comrade Ricardo send a note to the committee exposing Moreno because of his characterizations and factional proposals against Camilo? Why didn't he expose Moreno for proposing to organize a clique behind the back of the party in order to liquidate Camilo through organizational maneuvers? It's evident that Comrade Ricardo considers it legitimate to organize cliques and maneuvers against Camilo, to continue tendency or faction fights that are kept secret from the Bloc and its leadership.

This is indisputable; it comes out clearly in his letters. It is not possible to sow confusion by advancing the argument that I took the initiative to organize the clique, as Comrade Ricardo insinuates. What is important is that Comrade Ricardo agreed to organize a clique with Moreno against Camilo.

The above suppositions do not at all imply that I accept Comrade Ricardo's version. Since there are no witnesses, there is no way to prove which version is correct. However, comrades of the Bloc leadership have witnessed two attitudes which should be used in judging the two versions:

First attitude: Comrade Ricardo affirms that I proposed organizing a clique and he doesn't denounce me to the party. My behavior is completely the opposite: I exhaustively reported to several members of the Bloc leadership before and after my trip to Europe. After Ricardo's friends explained that their loyalty to the Bloc and its organizational and political needs took absolute precedence over their friendship with Ricardo, I then made a denunciation in all the Bloc's basic units.

Second attitude: Comrade Ricardo always did his best to exacerbate political and personal rifts, antipathies, and differences within the party leadership. My behavior, diametrically different, was to do the best I could to alleviate tensions of all types and to create a fraternal, united, and homogeneous leadership team. The letters from Comrade Gladys and the practical experience of leadership comrades testify in my favor.

This last point is much more important than the previous one, since it concerns not only the formal aspect of information and clear relationships with party bodies, but also something much more important for a Marxist characterization, the only criterion for truth a Marxist accepts: my personal political practice.

B. The Liar Is Caught

It's very difficult to lie consistently, and much more difficult to do so in written form. Thus, Comrade Ricardo's correspondence is full of contradictions on all the points under discussion. However, I'll deal only with the most important one, which concerns the question of the alleged tendency fight after the June 1976 Central Committee meeting.

In the same letter to Comrade _____ [Blank in text—Translator], dated March 21, 1977, Comrade Ricardo states two completely different things: that in October I told him that the tendency fight was continuing, and that in October I told him the tendency fight was not continuing. Let's check the quotes:

"Actually, as I wrote in my December letter, Comrade Moreno informed me in October that the *tendency fight was continuing.*"

But a few paragraphs earlier, he wrote:

"I can't develop my interpretation of the *tendency fight*. . . . But I can mention one point which is crucial in regard to my *difference with Moreno*, and now with you. It concerns the method. You are *confusing formal definitions with real processes*. . . . therefore, you don't see that the *tendency struggle continued*, taking the form of opposition on the organizational level in order to prevent the development of the very policy that had been adopted."

In this second statement, Comrade Ricardo affirms that he had differences with Moreno, that he has differences with Moreno and "now" also with Gladys on the question of the tendency fight. According to him, although there were unanimous "formal definitions" on the political level, "the tendency struggle continued" on the organizational level. This is the difference "he had" and has with Moreno. The question arises: when did he have this difference?

The comrade wrote this letter in March of this year. The only personal contact I had with him before then was during my trip to Europe in October of last year. Between that contact and the letter, I had no correspondence with Comrade Ricardo. My only contact during this period was

a telephone call, which is tape recorded and in which nothing was said about the tendency fight. This undoubtedly means that Comrade Ricardo had a difference with me in October on the problem of whether or not the tendency fight was continuing inside the Socialist Bloc and that in March he still had this difference. However, in the first quote, Comrade Ricardo affirms that in October I "informed" him that "the tendency fight was continuing." This contradiction in the statements made in the same letter by Comrade Ricardo proves categorically that his version of our conversations in October is a straight-faced lie.

C. The Phone Call

Comrade Ricardo's factionalism has blinded him to the point of thinking that he has unique privileges within the leadership. Thus, he strongly accuses me—because in our phone conversation I told him that everything was the same in the Bloc—of lying since changes had taken place in the leadership.

But, this phone call and everything I said had been voted on by the Executive Committee, which had decided against giving personal information and that all information had to be given through official channels, as is appropriate in a serious and Bolshevik organization. This means that if somebody has to speak with Comrade Darío in Mexico or Comrade Ricardo in Paris, we have to tell them that everything is the same and that they will receive information through the body of which they are members, the Central Committee. The only thing I did was to apply a resolution adopted by the Executive Committee, which I consider entirely correct. Moreover, Comrade Gladys was to have been present during this phone call, but wasn't because it was delayed.

But the most serious aspect of the charge of lying that Comrade Ricardo is making against me is that it implies a conception of the party that is completely the opposite of the Bolshevik conception. How could Comrade Ricardo think that in a phone call agreed to in advance I could have spoken in a personal capacity? How could he think that I hadn't informed the Executive Committee and asked for instructions, since I knew beforehand that we'd be speaking to one another?

In a Bolshevik party, a leader always consults before acting. Only in unforeseen circumstances and when there's no possibility to consult does he act on his own. This is what, for instance, I was compelled to do in Europe when Comrade Ricardo placed me in an unforeseen situation by rejecting the organizational changes and proposing a cliquist agreement against Camilo and Kemel. But what is an exception for a Bolshevik is the norm for Comrade Ricardo. Therefore, I maintain that there is a general anti-Bolshevik, personalist conception of the party that lies behind these accusations about the phone call.

D. Comrade Ricardo's Letters

Why, comrades, do I insist on details, on little things? All the letters sent to Comrade Gladys incontestably show that for him the tendency fight never ended, always existed, and still exists. At the end of last December and later, Comrade Ricardo wrote Comrade Gladys saying that the tendency fight was continuing and was stronger than ever, that he disagreed with the basic organizational

changes taking place in the leadership, that he didn't believe things were going well for the Bloc, and that there were serious problems.

He was writing all this privately, but officially he said just the opposite. He never said such things to the Bloc leadership. In December, at the same time as the letter to Comrade Gladys, he sent another letter to the party in which he said that Comrade Gladys is completely correct in her criticisms of him, that he agrees completely with the activities of comrades Camilo and Kemel and with everything that's being done in the organization.

These facts, which are tangible, concrete, and documented, allow for only one explanation. Comrade Ricardo systematically lied to the leadership of the Bloc and to the Bloc as a whole; he never informed the leadership of his real political thinking. In a Bolshevik party this sort of thing has a name: Comrade Ricardo is a leader who is disloyal to the organization and its leadership.

III. Conclusions

It is necessary to summarize and to state more clearly some basic conclusions on which to judge Comrade Ricardo.

a) It is an indisputable fact that Comrade Ricardo was against the nominations and the division of tasks in the secretariat, and wanted to maintain everything unchanged. It is necessary that the leadership deepen its balance sheet of these changes. There can be no doubt that they have been extraordinarily progressive, pillars of the tremendous progress made by the party.

Thus, a key question arises: why did he want everything to remain the same, resisting such changes?

Comrade Ricardo had every right—and this speaks in his favor—to have opposed comrades Gladys and Eduardo, his intimate friends, being promoted if he didn't consider them able to carry out new tasks. It would have been an outstanding example of Trotskyist morality to put friendship aside and take only the interests of the party into consideration.

But Comrade Ricardo not only opposed his friends—without even explaining to them the real reasons, as should be done with real friends. He didn't propose anyone else for filling the vacant posts. Nor did he propose any other organizational solution. The comrade was and still is against any promotions and against the post he held while absent (political secretary) and the one he also wanted to fill when he returned (general secretary) being taken by other comrades.

Why? For me there is only one explanation. The comrade is not only a factionalist, but what is worse, a die-hard individualist. He comes first, second, and third, then come his friends and cliques, and the party comes last. He considers himself so superior that he believes that only he can fill the party's most important posts. For this reason he didn't suggest a single comrade for the vacant leadership positions: he considered himself irreplaceable.

b) The complaint that the Italian comrades transmitted to the Bloc leadership through me is further confirmation of this individualism. These comrades criticized Comrade Ricardo harshly because he preferred to go to Greece for fifteen days, where he had no urgent tasks to accomplish, instead of participating in an event as important as the

convention of the French LCR. The Italian comrades feel that Comrade Ricardo subordinated this decisive task to his touristic inclinations, since they insisted that he attend the LCR convention. When I got back to Colombia, I learned that he also neglected the recommendation of the Bloc leadership, which had sent him credentials to attend this convention.

In this case as in all the others, Comrade Ricardo comes first, second, and third, and what the Italian comrades wanted and what the Tendency needed comes last.

c) The same thing can be said for his theory that the tendency struggle was continuing in the Bloc because there was a serious discussion on organizational questions. Comrade Ricardo appears to be ignorant of the fact that in all Bolshevik parties there are sharp discussions on present and immediate problems which have nothing to do with tendency fights.

Furthermore, he believes that the organizational discussion was the continuation of the previous political fight but in other arenas. He forgets that in this discussion comrades of the leadership aligned themselves quite differently than before. The tendency that had been formed to fight to join the Fourth International and to build the Bolshevik Tendency divided: Moreno, Gladys, and Eduardo were on one side on the organizational question; Socorro and Gustavo were on the other. The previous tendency of Camilo, Kemel, and Darío also divided: Camilo and Kemel were opposed to the organizational changes; in Mexico, Darío was implementing them.

These facts clearly proved that the old tendency fight no longer existed; what was taking place was a simple discussion on immediate questions or, at worst, a new tendency fight with new programs and new alignments. But Comrade Ricardo drew the opposite conclusion. Why? Because for Comrade Ricardo, the tendency that fought for the Bloc's adherence to the Fourth International and the building of the Bolshevik Tendency was composed of him and only him.

d) Comrade Ricardo's exacerbated individualism is linked with the history of the Bloc and with his own history. The Bloc was born and grew up in the student and university milieu, a breeding ground for the most ferocious individualism and maneuverism. To this education common to the entire Bloc, Comrade Ricardo adds an individual ingredient that strengthens the vices of this milieu: his education in the coffeehouses and intellectual Bohemia. It is in this way that the comrade developed his extraordinary intelligence, thanks to the habits of indefatigable polemicist of the cafes for whom everything turns around his personal victory in the discussion. His brilliant political career, his big achievements, take place when these polemical habits coincide with big political needs for the development of the Bloc, when there are sharp tendency or faction fights (URS, LOC, Tendencia Bolchevique). Even at these moments, he inflates his own ego and exacerbates to the extreme his characteristic individualistic factionalism; but his defects are more than compensated by the progressive role he plays.

However, when the "dull and peaceful" time comes for the daily activity of building the party, Comrade Ricardo's virtues and faults are reversed: his egocentrism, his Bohemian and cliquist habits, come forward as his dominant features. This happened in the last few months of his relationship with the Bloc and its leadership, when a real

Bolshevik party began to be built. This contradiction between the building of the Bloc and Comrade Ricardo's personality has become more intolerable every day.

This same contradiction explains why his most intimate collaborators in building the Bolshevik Tendency are now his principal critics. While through a terrific personal effort they are changing every day in harmony with the progress and building of the Bloc, in practice Comrade Ricardo resisted and still very sharply resists these changes. Between his individualistic and coffeehouse polemical habits and the building of the Bloc, he chooses his ego. That's what has happened. That's what will happen in the future if he doesn't change and doesn't adapt his personality to the Bloc instead of trying to adapt the Bolshevik Tendency, the Bloc, and its leadership to his personality.

d) [*sic*] It is appropriate here to sound the methodological alert concerning my own weaknesses. We cannot exclude that I am unilateral (who isn't) and that I am reacting subjectively toward the comrade. However, I was always optimistic about this comrade's evolution. I am almost certain that when he went to Europe I had a very favorable opinion of him; I held him in very high esteem and was sad when he left. Up until my second meeting with him in October of last year, I was sure that he was still the unchallenged leader of the process of Bolshevization of the Bloc.

I want to confess to the Executive Committee and the Central Committee of the Colombian PST that I suffered two very deep subjective crises as a result of my relations with Comrade Ricardo, and these subjective crises may have left their mark on me. One of these subjective crises I have already mentioned, it relates to my disgust in relation to what he said at the June Central Committee meeting. The other was grave, although subjective. Since it is known to various members of the leadership and since I believe this could have predisposed me against Comrade Ricardo, I want to relate it, in relation to me personally and only as it concerns me. I expressly prohibit its being published for the rank and file and utilized against the comrade, because it could provoke reactions of an emotionally charged rather than political character. I authorize only that it be borne in mind in relation to me and for this sole reason I'm telling it.

[In the mimeographed version of this letter circulated in the PST, a blank space follows Comrade Moreno's explanation—Translator.]

With this explanation, the comrades of the Bloc leadership have an additional element to judge whether there are subjective elements in my positions that have nothing to do with the debated question.

e) It is therefore necessary to deal with the problem of Ricardo abstracted from all subjective considerations of sympathy or antipathy and from all legalistic considerations that could get lost in a labyrinth of verbal tenses and analyses of phrases or historical anecdotes.

It is necessary to combine the verification of facts with characterizations. It's possible to prove almost anything on the basis of facts and phrases. But a big injustice can be committed through a mere characterization. The characterization is determined and illustrated with facts; therefore, it is decisive. Facts must correlate in order to support the characterization.

It is for this reason that we must take the verified facts,

in particular the experiences we have lived through, along with the hypotheses, to see what characterization is correct before we say anything.

First: When Comrade Ricardo was in Colombia, did the Bloc progress toward the building of a fraternal and homogeneous leadership team as the one it now has? Was it possible to do the same in the party? Or, on the contrary, when he was there, was it impossible to make progress in improving the leadership of the Bloc?

Second: Did Ricardo's absence objectively aid the gigantic progress made by the Bloc and its leadership? Or, on the contrary, did it postpone and obstruct it?

Third: After having read Comrade Ricardo's letters to the Bloc and to Comrade Gladys, how do we characterize Comrade Ricardo? Does he make the same analysis to both parties, or, on the contrary, does he make contradictory analyses to the party and privately?

Fourth: Is it normal for a leader of the Bloc to express his political and organizational opinions to Comrade Gladys and not to the leadership and to the party?

Fifth: After the June Central Committee, what happened in the Bloc? Did a normal discussion take place as in all Bolshevik parties, or, on the contrary, was a ferocious tendency fight continuing?

Before voting on the proposals that I support concerning Comrade Ricardo, all comrades must categorically answer these questions.

f) Correct or not, the measures we propose have just objectives:

To educate the entire Socialist Bloc and Comrade Ricardo himself by showing that in a Bolshevik party such as the one we are building we have to be much more severe with leaders than with the rank and file, because we want leaders of the party and not a party of leaders.

To protect the Socialist Bloc from Comrade Ricardo's methods, which we consider disloyal and clearly destructive in this period.

And fundamentally to definitively make Comrade Ricardo a leader of our party and our international, giving him the broadest possibilities to develop, but at the same time demanding a coherent structure to his social and political life, disciplined and loyal to the party and its leadership.

Therefore, these measures should be accompanied by the most fraternal attitude toward the comrade and by the systematic recognition of his great merits and of all he has done to build the Socialist Bloc and the Bolshevik Tendency.

APPENDIX B

Transcript of May 10-11, 1977, Discussion at PST Executive Committee Meeting

Discussion Between Executive Committee and Comrade R.S. Concerning Disciplinary Actions Taken Against Him on May 10 and 11, 1977 (Transcribed Directly From Tape Recordings)

H. . . . To reply in writing, since the time he has asked for is little enough, and requested in a collaborative spirit. I put the proposal forward in my name and in that of Comrade Gladys.

E.B. Postponed until tomorrow? At the same time?

H. Yes, at the same time.

R.S. One thing . . . I'd like to know who is going to coordinate the meeting. How will the meeting be coordinated?

H. The general secretary. I make the motion.

R.S. Very well. But before the motion is put up for discussion, I want some procedural information. How are the comrades thinking of organizing the discussion?

H. The same as usual. You'll be given time, then the accusers will be given the same amount of time; then we'll get down to discussion, and finally you will wind up.

G.V. There is a document, listing the accusations against the comrade.

H. Yes, you reply, then we can open discussion. There is no report on the charges, no, you can refute it as you think fit.

R.S. In that case I want to make a concrete proposal, to take the place of the proposal made by comrades Hugo and Gladys. I have done my best to try to get the documents and all that, but the last part of the document was handed to me only an hour and a half ago by the comrade, what is

her name? Comrade Amelia, that's right. I have therefore only just seen it and been able to read it extremely quickly, extremely quickly. So the request I'm making is that I be given until Monday, to be given time to reply. Comrade Hugo's letter is rather long; I should study the letters that I have asked for that I sent from Europe to the Executive Committee, and distribute to the comrades . . . I asked the comrade to get photocopies so that . . . photocopies so that other comrades can have access to the file. In addition there is a danger that the file might suddenly be lost through carelessness. Therefore, between now and Monday, I'll prepare my reply. No? Because if not, I'll have to write it and all that tonight, and I want to have time to study calmly the questions being raised here. That is my motion.

? I agree that the comrade should have time to . . . the documents and to make a proposal.

H. My and Gladys's motion notes that, and notes that the comrade didn't attend the meeting of the commission with the complete agreement of the commission and myself and the comrade didn't come [one or two words unclear] on Monday. These are all opportunities for the comrade to exercise his democratic rights. The question here is very simple. We are not dealing with a polemic against my document; let's be clear what the question is. What we're dealing with is the charges made in these two sheets, and the comrade must reply yes or no; for the moment he'll be able to respond orally. The question is not what polemics he makes against my document. The problem is whether the comrade accepts these charges or not.

I could have come here to make an oral discussion, to read my document, say what concrete charges are made against the comrade, and the comrade could take notes and reply to them. Of course, all this is supplementary. It could be a . . . The question is one of the comrade's own characterization* [See footnote page 26.]: "I didn't do this, I don't believe this, that, and the other." I think that in one day the comrade has time.

R.S. That's why, comrade, you say it's a question of spirit. I agree that it is a question of spirit. I simply. . . to study the documents.

H. I'm going to explain why not. I'm going to explain this to you.

? Is it simply a request to be allowed to read. . .

R.S. Insofar as the proposals you and the other comrades are making have parts that say, we base these charges on such and such letters attached, if I am to respond, I should see and study the letters and immediately give categorical answers. I see this very clearly. We base these charges on the attached letters from Comrade Ricardo to Comrade Gladys. . . attached letter to Comrade Moreno, to the Executive Committee, minutes from the EC. . . to Comrade Ricardo. . . from the CC . . . a precise characterization of the comrade's behavior. It is obvious that I must study the letters upon which the accusations are based. I agree with Comrade Hugo on. . . simply of concrete charges. . . to my comrades, to give them a proper, serious, and objective reply of what solutions the problem practically . . .

G.J. I would propose. . . that we of the Executive Committee meet and decide on both proposals. . . ten minutes and then we'll. . . to Ricardo . . .

? Sounds good to me.

R.S. It doesn't sound good to me that the decision be made without my being there. But I will, of course, leave but it seems to me an obstacle to the appropriate spirit to develop a discussion . . .

G.J. . . . a proposal, Ricardo.

R.S. That is why I am not a meaningful factor. I am making a request. I will not take part in the discussion or anything.

H. I don't see what problem there is if we meet without your presence.

R.S. Neither do I see a problem if you do it—why you can't do it in my presence, Hugo, in the best spirit.

H. . . . That I'm not a factionalist, but obviously you want to go against my opinion. You've made a big stink presenting a contrary opinion.

R.S. We have to wait for the Executive Committee to decide, so that actions can be according to. . . so in five minutes there is a vote.

H. But you can't ask me to ask for you to be removed.

R.S. Ah, but I'm not saying that, Hugo, no I'm giving my opinion.

G.V. Let's see, comrades, let's get this settled. This is an EC meeting to which Comrade Ricardo has been summoned. Comrade Ricardo is making a request to this meeting, which was called for that purpose, that the discussion be postponed until Monday, so that he can reply to the charges that are here. I think that we're perfectly capable of reaching a decision on that at this meeting, without having to call another. I don't know what the comrades want clarified. Here we can decide whether the meeting is postponed, and when the meeting

will be. The EC is meeting, the comrade has been summoned, and he has put forward his reasons. . . . We can decide now, that is, Monday we agreed to bring all the materials here, then the comrade made a request. I believe, Comrade Hugo, comrades, that we can decide whether the meeting is to be tomorrow, Monday, or now. That is what we are meeting for.

? I don't say that we can't.

L.C.V. I think the best way of avoiding a long and pointless discussion is for the comrades of the EC to meet and then inform Comrade Sánchez of the decision, and that for a reason of method. Of course this is a meeting of the EC with the comrade, but it is a meeting where the EC is going to pose a series of questions to the comrade and where the comrade has made a proposal to the EC. It seems to me that, as a method, in addition to the discussion of the proposal, we should have an overall discussion, finishing the discussion, trying to place the criteria, and then we should inform the comrade. I support Gladys's proposal.

E.B. The proposal is that we decide if the meeting is to be postponed, and if so, to when, and whether the comrade should be present. I'm in agreement, for the reasons already put forward by Comrade Valencia.

E.O. I'm also in favor of Comrade Gladys's proposal and agree with Comrade Valencia's analysis.

H. I with an addition, comrades, that the resolution we adopt be discussed again with the comrade, a commission. . . with the EC. . . the possibility of an agreement with the comrade.

R.S. I don't understand Comrade Hugo.

H. What the EC votes will not be definitive, but will be discussed with the comrade again.

R.S. I shall restate my position so that it is absolutely clear. I ask that the meeting be Monday. I have said to Comrade Hugo, I said to the EC since last Monday that I would give my opinions, but I will totally abide by what the comrades say. I ask, in order to exercise my right to defend myself faced with these accusations, the elementary right. . . that to study the documents. . . and that without that right I will not bargain but I will abide by what the comrades want.

H. The right to Monday.

R.S. No, Hugo, the right to request.

H. Oh—that.

E.B. Any more, comrades. . . or do we vote?

H. Then what was voted, then since we reserved. The question is when will he present the document.

? Absolutely everything be taped.

L.C.V. Now, comrades the decision taken by the EC is that in principle the meeting be postponed until Thursday night, and that the comrade present the documents he feels necessary to either confirm or refute the charges by Thursday midday. We feel that the main reason for not postponing it until Monday is that in the first place the work of the EC should maintain its normal rhythm, its dynamic, it should respond to the needs of the party. We cannot therefore submit this discussion to a whole process of letters and counterletters, more letters and more replies. We have to centralize the discussion basically around the charges and around the disciplinary actions that have been posed.

We think that the time allowed is sufficient for the comrade to give us his reply in a precise and concise

manner. And that on the basis of this we shall hold the discussion on Thursday. We have also reached a decision that prior commitments (such as trips, etc.) that comrades made have been put off so that all members of the EC can attend. So the comrade is to supply us with what material he considers useful Thursday at noon.

R.S. First, comrades, I want to make clear that my proposal has not been accepted. I made my proposal for Monday. It seems to me that, on principle, we should accept the proposal to postpone for a few days, and my proposal was for Monday. What I'd like to know is on what day did the EC discussions referred to in the memorandum about Comrade Ricardo's rights in the June 1976 Central Committee, take place? On what dates did the discussions in the EC of the record of Comrade Ricardo in the party take place?

H. There were about fifteen or twenty meetings, but there is a problem. . .

R.S. But the one that analyzed in depth the record of Comrade Ricardo.

H. Each time I've returned here, I have given the report. There has. . .

R.S. Yes, but there must have been an EC meeting at which there was a report that initiated the disciplinary proceedings.

H. To initiate the proceedings?

R.S. Yes, to start the proceedings, more or less how long ago—five days, three, ten days?

E.B. This paragraph refers to the following, to the discussions. . .

R.S. . . . A meeting of the EC where it was decided to begin proceedings, on what date was it? There was a meeting where it was decided to begin proceedings, right?

H. During which the accusations were heard?

R.S. Exactly, at which the accusations were heard. How long ago was it?

H. About ten, eleven days ago.

R.S. It doesn't matter whether it was seven or ten days. That's not the important part of it.

H. That has got nothing to do with this, that has got nothing to do with what is being presented.

R.S. It was for my information, Hugo. Let's see now, Comrade Valencia, the accusing comrades have had ten days in which to prepare their case, which they presented verbally at an EC meeting at least ten days ago. They have had until May 10, 1977—according to the date here—after they announced they would bring charges. Comrade Hugo promised me that he would give me the letter on Sunday night. Then he explained that it was still in draft form, and asked if we could meet the following day, Monday, and I agreed, telling him to take as long as he needed so that everything would be quite clear. Then there were further delays, always because the letter was not yet finished. I consider this natural. The comrade has every right to reflect and see how best to put forward his ideas with precision, to discuss it. The same is true of the comrades who met to discuss the resolution before presenting it, isn't it?

It is therefore only an elementary right that I'm asking for, that I be granted adequate time, and one that is not in any way going to paralyze any party activity.

What we're discussing is important, very important. This is the first time we're going to have a trial inside the Socialist Bloc. This is going to set a fundamental prece-

dent in the history of the party, and all we're asking is for a minimum amount of time necessary to analyze the accusations.

Comrade Luis Carlos, this paper here, as the Spanish say, makes a series of accusations that are substantiated in a series of documents, the last part of which I have just been handed by Comrade Julio, including the last part of Comrade Hugo's document, and of course my response to it will be either yes or no, but that response is a characterization. I am going to make a characterization. To make a characterization that must lead to a "yes" or "no," I need an elementary amount of time. It cannot be demanded—as Comrade Moreno did at the beginning—that I now answer "yes" or "no." These answers are a characterization. No, we Marxists cannot accept this kind of coercion. We will reply yes or no on the basis of a characterization. The EC of the Socialist Bloc and Comrade Moreno can rest assured that they will get their answer on Monday. They will have the answer to all the problems. This is not a diversionary maneuver, only an elementary moral request that I be allowed the time to reflect on the accusations that have been made against me. It is an elementary right.

Comrades, this could constitute a serious precedent, so I ask the comrades to reconsider the measure. I have shown all possible good intentions in allowing Comrade Hugo, not for personal reasons, to have all the time he needed. I spent all afternoon waiting for the letters to be returned so I could analyze the files. I've tried to find Comrade Eduardo and others by phone to save time. I have told all the comrades to please give me the documents so as not to waste time. Comrades, I have just got back after nine months away, and I have just been informed of what I am being accused of. I will be asking immediately, Comrade Luis Carlos, a series of questions to the EC, for information, since after nine months away I need information to be able to reply to these charges. After nine months I have the elementary right to reply to these accusations.

You cannot already have made a decision. According to what Comrade Moreno has told me personally, the EC had already practically reached a decision. You cannot pre-judge. You have to be willing to listen to a defense on the understanding that there could well be an error here, and it is possible to demonstrate that the proofs are false. The attitude being imposed by Comrade Moreno that you are a factionalist, that you have to leave the meeting, has not yet been, cannot be accepted. You haven't yet decided that I am a factionalist, and up to this point I'm not a factionalist. I'm still a member of the Central Committee of the Socialist Bloc, and I am still appealing to be invited to the EC, right now. So my attitude was—I'm going to give you an answer, comrades—totally clear on every one, as Comrade Luis Carlos said, every one of these points, but the conditions you impose make it awfully difficult for me to exercise my right of defense, because there is an accusation, there are some charges, and they deserve an answer. I'm not asking for a month, two months or three months, I'm not asking for a procrastination. From the start I showed my best attitude, so really, Comrade Luis Carlos, really, I don't follow your argument about paralyzing the activities of the party, which is what is central. The two can't be counterposed at this moment. This is a vital problem, just as important as the activity of the whole party of the whole Socialist Bloc. Here we are going to decide on a central, fundamental question of method, of

Trotskyism. We are going to see how I will answer the characterization. We are going to see the essence of my position. This charge is going to get an answer from me. Yes, I'm going to answer this charge. But this is not an inquisition—yes or no, yes or no. We are going to answer, yes or no, to all of them, all the charges, according to each piece of evidence and the circumstances, and we are going to offer a reply on every point, accepting what we consider correct and showing what is false; no, I need a number of elementary facts, you. . . . a. . . . after nine months can't I ask who are the members of the EC, for example? Isn't this in order? Don't I have the right to this information? Who votes? What comrades are attending as guests—don't I have the right to know this? I ask you, comrades. Well, that is my position, comrades.

H. Well, comrades, I want to say a few things in reply. This commission was formed to interview you and it has been functioning twenty-four hours, that is, to carry out this work it took twenty-four hours, because it is very conscious of how time is of the essence. First, if what is being discussed is a question of method. As a question of method, in any meeting of a proletarian party—Whether it is orally, or in writing, or in on-the-spot memorandums, it is your right to ask who are the members of the Executive Committee, and it is the right of any member. That doesn't have anything to do with what is being judged. What does that have to do—

R.S. No, Hugo, to know who it is that's judging me.

H. The Executive Committee.

R.S. That's why I ask who is it that is voting? Who can vote here?

H. What does this have to do with the trial? What does it have to do with it? The EC—that is the secret of democratic centralism. It decides what conditions it wants. The only thing the EC cannot do is take a disciplinary measure without letting you know what you are accused of, without you being able to defend yourself. Nothing else. It doesn't even have to be in writing, it doesn't have to be after a previous debate, and there doesn't have to be any discussion opened up. I have here the statutes of the Fourth International, which are quite categorical.

R.S. Look, let me ask you something, Hugo, since you are a leader of the international. Is there anything that forbids the defendant from defending himself in writing?

H. If the EC summons him and tells him, these are the accusations, now you start defending yourself. Afterwards the EC decides if what you have said makes it worth the trouble to postpone the session. Because tomorrow we might find out that someone is carrying out another organization's entryism here. Then what? Are we going to establish a precedent and summon him, summon him in writing? He says: how much time did you take to prepare this document? A month, I ask for a month to reply to everything.

R.S. We're not discussing a case of a guy carrying out entryism; we'll be discussing these . . .

H. No, the concrete cases, this series of documents, no. What is being discussed here is this, just as Valencia said. So you raised a question and I give you my answer, this commission, this commission was formed to interview you, to discuss how the discussion of these problems was going to be organized. It just decided, after the meeting that you did not attend, to study the problem in depth and come to a conclusion. When you said, when you said that it was ten

days; you were completely wrong. It was no more than a day.

R.S. Hugo, analyzing the whole trial . . .

H. This letter took me 72 hours.

R.S. But to write it, not to think it out, Hugo. I'm going to delay four or five hours, too.

H. But you don't have the same right. It's a problem of method. It's a concrete problem. I'm the one accusing.

R.S. I definitely have the same right. I definitely have the same right.

H. Not at all.

R.S. It's you who's accusing and I who am defending.

H. That's right.

R.S. There are four of you, four of you accusing, right? Here is the memorandum, signed by four comrades.

H. But what does that have to do . . . ?

R.S. Yes, okay. All right, let's not have discussions . . .

H. So what you have to do is defend yourself. You have to say, these charges, I agree with them . . . I don't know how so much documentation . . .

R.S. No. My answer is going to be very short. I need to study the evidence and see what it says, the memorandum.

H. But what is this of evidence, we're not in a trial . . .

R.S. Clearly!

H. It's not a bourgeois trial.

R.S. It's not a bourgeois trial; it's the principle of the truth.

H. It's a proletarian trial . . .

R.S. According to the proletarian principle, the truth requires knowing the documents.

H. No, the proletarian principle . . . That's the legalistic principle of hearing. The proletarian—

R.S. No it's not legalistic.

H. —principle means reading and then saying "I agree" or "I disagree."

R.S. No. Because I have to see . . . by agreeing you say: According to evidence presented here. So I have to see . . .

H. No . . .

R.S. The proletarian principle can't get in the way of the elementary right of defense, means of defense. What are you afraid of? Conditions in which there isn't any coercion.

H. The conditions are explained in the statutes.

R.S. That there is no coercion, that there is no coercion, though!

H. What you have to say, don't try and see if you can maneuver with some document, what you have to see, is to say, I agree, I agree with this, or disagree, according to your Trotskyist conscience.

R.S. According to my conscience I have an answer which I'm going to present, a characterization.

H. So do it.

R.S. Because I have to look, as you say here. There is the accusation of lying to the organization as a whole, presenting officially the opposite of . . . private conversations and correspondence on the political situation . . . of the Socialist Bloc. This charge is based on such and such letters.

H. You can read them in an hour.

R.S. But comrade, please, of course you are so quick and talented and all that; comrades, I ask for a minimum, moderate amount of time.

H. I asked for the floor to point out to you that this commission has been sitting twenty-four hours . . . yesterday, yesterday.

R.S. But this commission had sufficient time to think about the problem, and I only found out about this today.

H. This commission was formed to interview the comrade.

R.S. And the comrade said he was willing to go before the commission if the commission asked him, but to facilitate a better understanding he would go to the political bureau. So Comrade Moreno said okay, fine, that the commission was not important, he was in complete agreement to my going.

H. But going to the bureau to discuss everything.

R.S. Right, to discuss everything.

H. To discuss everything; not the procedures, to discuss the accusations.

R.S. Comrades, comrades, I am . . . and I am going to reply. I think it is a very bad mistake, you are not giving guarantees, you are not giving me confidence that I am really, yes, what I want is to feel confident that I am being judged by party comrades, who are ready to listen to a defense in which my arguments can convince them, not just for me to tell them that the accusations here are not false, or are false, for example. It's not just a question of whether they're false or not, it's a question of the exercise of the right of defense here, in this concrete case, to be heard by the appropriate party body, with the small amount of time of three or four days that I'm asking, to read and to think out the problem. I've been out of the country for eight or nine months, I haven't talked with anyone. Now you want me to speak at a trial put together in certain political circumstances.

H. It's a difference of twenty-four hours.

R.S. It's from Thursday to Monday.

H. No, you're asking for three or four days now. We're giving you forty-eight hours.

R.S. Excuse me, then. I'm asking until Monday, comrades I'm especially not referring to Thursday, but to the arguments as well as my charges which they say they have synthesized.

H. I had the floor. First, when we discussed Sunday noon I informed you of the essence of the charges that we were going to bring; as early as Sunday. All this is more reason why you should help us more. The essence is that we delayed only a few hours in doing this. The point is that you have to study this and afterwards, with your defense, you can argue for the EC to postpone. . .

E.B. No, but the thing is it can be placed . . . I propose the following, comrades.

R.S. The conversation which we had on Sunday, to respond to you Hugo, was a conversation in which ideas were exchanged, not established, you said that you were going to press charges, it may be this, it may be that, there was a strong altercation on your part above all, etc., an informal conversation, to which I do not attribute any more than secondary importance.

I go to the official bodies, that is why on Monday I came to the body, to ask the leadership body for information. Yes, that is it, comrades, if you want to give me the confidence of knowing that I will be judged impartially.

E.B. Very well, comrades.

R.S. And not submitted to coercion, psychological or political, with completely formal arguments, yes, on whether the party's activities will be paralyzed because of this, comrades, because on Monday I am going to exercise my right to defend myself, yes, because it is a part of the

proletarian trial, to declare yes or no, yes, that is it comrades.

E.B. I think that the comrade's position is clear, the reasons for the comrade's request. I personally believe that the decision we have made does not coerce the comrade in the least, does not set any precedent to prevent the comrade from presenting his arguments and points; what the EC or the commission poses as charges against the comrade is very concrete, and the comrade can refer to them very concretely. There is no exhaustive documentation that would require an exhaustive study of all aspects, etc. They are points, evidence of all this series of aspects; besides the problem that is posed is not a problem unknown to the comrade, either, no, if the comrade goes.

R.S. Completely unknown, completely unknown.

E.B. Excuse me, comrade, excuse me, comrade.

R.S. Completely unknown, Comrade Eduardo.

E.B. Comrade Hugo had already posed.

R.S. That's incredible.

E.B. Comrade Hugo said that on Sunday he had a talk with him, Ricardo talked with Comrade Gladys yesterday, he was given this simple memorandum.

R.S. Yesterday?

E.B. Very concrete, this morning then he was given this memorandum.

H. No but they were offered to you yesterday and you asked that they be given to you today because you had time to study them and to come to the meeting.

R.S. No but yesterday you told me . . . you did not tell me that it was the memorandum with the charges.

E.B. . . . today they were given to the comrade. . .

H. I told him what they were.

R.S. No, excuse me, I didn't understand. They were not presented to me formally . . . come, comrade, I made a call, I was talking with Laura Restrepo and Camilo González . . . look, I'm going to give you the documents, I thought it was the letter, he says there is a paper which we're going to give you, a note, and I told Hugo.

E.B. Look, comrade, please, please, comrade, let's continue the meeting then, for all these reasons.

R.S. . . . It's not worth it.

E.B. Excuse me, comrade, we're in the meeting.

R.S. Yes, we're in the meeting.

E.B. So, comrades, for all these reasons I think that we should uphold the decision, if it is thought that the decision should be discussed, the decision that the meeting should be Thursday night, well, we'll rediscuss it, I personally think that we should keep the meeting on Thursday.

H. Ask if there is a motion against.

E.B. Yes, is there anyone against? No one against.

H. Comrades, Comrade Rita was present at my earlier talk on Sunday, and I told her that the EC had the most antifactual attitude and that if there had been discussion of adopting even the smallest decision without the comrade being present, it would have been factional against the comrade; these were my words, and I am saying this because the comrade is trying to prepare his defense, and we can attack him later for having maneuvered, he is trying to distort the conversation with me when I said exactly the opposite of what the comrade says; I make this clarification; let it be tape recorded well.

R.S. The answer is also going to be tape recorded well.

E.B. Well, comrades, if there is no one. . .

R.S. Comrades, I ask for the floor because a statement has been made before the voting.

E.B. You have the floor, comrade.

R.S. Yes, it's a very simple matter. The comrade is answering on an aspect of the meeting which I have not referred to. In the conversation we had Sunday—I referred to the fact that the conversation Sunday was of an informal character, on secondary points, that he did not say anything to me other than an exchange of ideas and that I consider this meeting with the comrade to have been of only secondary importance, and that it is not true that the EC—unfortunately and I am sorry to say it—made no decision on it without Comrade Ricardo's presence. Five, ten, or fifteen minutes ago it was demanded that I leave the EC despite the fact that I formally called attention to this so you would not make this error. What is unfortunate is that Comrade Hugo would have cautioned the EC about the preparation of the defense, this is what it is, comrades; so I am the one making the motion to reconsider the voting until Monday and to vote formally on that.

E.B. All right, comrades, is there any opposition to setting a meeting for Thursday? All right, I think the decision to hold a Thursday meeting at 8:00 p.m. is upheld.

G.J. Excuse me; I have a meeting from . . . 6:00 to 8:30.

K. That's cancelled.

E.B. Cancelled; we decided that before.

—Leave early.

G.J. What I ask is that it be postponed a half hour.

—No, no, no.

E.B. All right, comrades, at the meeting we held yesterday, we decided to put off the discussion until tomorrow at 8:00 p.m., but this morning Comrade Ricardo attended the EC meeting and presented to that meeting the statement which the comrades know about, the mimeographed one.

J.R. Not everyone . . . I just finished passing out the last ones because it's been impossible. . .

E.B. Well, if you want we'll read it. It's extremely brief and it reads as follows: "I make the following declaration in response to the accusations presented May 20 by Comrades Gladys, Eduardo, Julio, and Moreno. One, I have carried out acts which have factional, nefarious, and superserious consequences for the party; two, a reading of the letters I sent to Comrade Gladys shows that they were written in a frame of mind affected by acute contradictions and that they were inspired by an ultrasectarian and liquidationist environment incompatible with a leader of the party, which obviously means I deserve the most severe sanctions. Apart from the sanction that is decided on, I declare myself unfit for five years to hold any positions other than rank-and-file member, or to represent the party at any national or international event, or to take part in the editing or writing of party or Tendency magazines. Signed by Comrade Ricardo Sánchez."

On the basis of this statement we decided in the secretariat, with Comrade Ricardo present, to summon all the comrades tonight at eight to have a discussion on the basis of the statement presented by the comrade and the memorandum presented yesterday to the commission named by the EC and signed by Comrades Gladys, Julio, Eduardo and Comrade Moreno; so these are the two central aspects of the meeting we are holding today and which we must discuss and the reason why we moved the meeting forward to today. The only comrade not here is Comrade Carlos Pizarro who spoke with the comrade by

telephone; he was in Ibagué. The comrade agreed if I'm not mistaken to arrive.

J.R. Arrive at 8:30.

E.B. Arrive today at 8:30 p.m. from Ibagué. So it is the full EC meeting with the comrades invited, Comrades Rita, Lidia and Comrade Moreno; so that's the situation with today's meeting, comrades. Comrade Moreno was going to begin the discussion.

H. Comrades, first of all I want to ask you a question, because I've heard two versions of an oral appendix that was included concerning my letter. I thought of doing, in respect to this letter I want to make the following clarification, in a little more than a day and a half because Ricardo and I were agreed that Comrade Gladys's letters would not be used unless the comrade okayed it and the comrade okayed it only a day before the comrade came. For that reason I quote them in the last part and not in the first part; so I wanted to send a letter to the comrade and to the whole Executive Committee, which will study my letter carefully, and some comrades had already made some comments to me, but I did not decide to change my letter as a result of these comments from the comrades because my letter was an impromptu one written in a day and a half or two and must have an infinite number of errors of detail. And on other questions: already I have heard two or three comments from comrades, one from Comrade G. and another from Comrade Gladys, which are very interesting, and I invite all the comrades, although this matter is now being closed, to make any comments at all to me on the facts which I cite; it is a question of detail. Right now I'll bring up one: I said that we had no meeting with the friends of Ricardo. And Comrade Gladys reminded me that actually, there were Socorro, Gladys, and Eduardo Ospina and I. Maybe Socorro now informs me otherwise; so due to this problem, the spontaneous character of my letter, I want to know briefly what Ricardo had to say today.

R.S. No, I have read the statement, and I didn't know that there was a meeting of the EC; I came to find a comrade, and by chance I ran into the meeting. I also asked for Comrade Hugo, who was present, I read the statement and said that concerning the letter you sent, I am not going to make any pronouncement because I agree with the axis of the criticism, and there is an infinity of mistakes, especially of objective fact, on which I differ, but that I have no interest in answering them because it would be a personal polemic on my part, and I have no interest in that; I am keeping completely quiet.

H. I had heard that so . . . thank you very much. Okay, comrades, first of all I think that the comrade is to be congratulated; he is helping the party enormously. There is a French expression; the comrade who was in Europe must know it quite well. It is . . . and in this case it applies perfectly to someone who is a great leader of the Bloc, though in error. He has responded like a leader. It is a big help to the party and a great education to those followers the comrade has in the party. Second, I think that the resolution should be upheld. We should not accept under any circumstances the part that says, "apart from the sanction that is decided on, I declare myself unfit for five years to hold any positions other than rank-and-file member, or to represent the party at any national or international event, or to take part in the editing or writing of party or Tendency magazines." I think it does not correspond to the resolution at all or to anything of the

kind. I think we should uphold the resolution as it is; and this will facilitate fraternal relations with the comrade, more fraternal than ever, and I think that the comrade must have been under huge psychological pressure. I heard a great joke about the comrade, but deep down it is tragic. We have all gone through these tragedies. All of us, when the comrade [. . .] the struggle with himself [. . .] I think that from no point of view can we accept this opinion of the comrade. Five years is barbaric. We set a minimum period of six months; we'll see the process. I don't know if you know what I'm referring to. This is an opinion of the comrade and the party has to take the diametrically opposite opinion from that of the comrade; diametrically opposite. In this too we have to be Bolsheviks. We need the comrade very much. We are going to try to win him over as quickly as possible within our methods. The comrade continues to be a great leader and we are not going to and should not accept. We have to vote for the resolution that we are voting on here and reject this last part of the statement; reject: that is, there is a vote of rejection. Third, suspension (I already said this to Comrade Ricardo) is a mild sanction which is very common in Bolshevik parties and unfortunately very common among leaders because they make errors. Comrade Ernesto, who is our greatest leader, has been suspended; Comrade Pedro for two years; in our party it is very common for leaders to ask to be suspended but it is not, it does not coincide in any way with our opinion of Comrade Ricardo. He is, as I call him in my letter, a great leader with weak points such as everyone in the Bloc has. Fourth, comrades: I think that we should give the comrade a vacation of fifteen or twenty days, and after this vacation the comrade should make a long report and the party should have a big reception acknowledging the brutally hard task that the comrade carried out within the Bolshevik Tendency. Fifth: I believe that Comrade Jaime Galarza said this to me, and you should study it; it is a personal opinion of mine that the comrade has great ability as a speaker, especially in the type of speaking we want for the election campaign, oratory through dialogue, not the typical Colombian oratory. We are trying out a new type of speaking and the comrade must be available to the party to be a basic speaker to intervene in any situation where the party needs him, exchanging ideas with him, where he feels comfortable. And six: none of this means that we step aside from the resolution; we will follow all the points of the resolution. The fifth point will continue as a fundamental one, that is, nothing of what we have been saying takes on a demagogic character of concessions to the comrade. OK, comrades, to close my report, which is quite short, I want to express the opinion that today's meeting is a big step forward for the Bloc, and a big step forward for Comrade Ricardo. It begins a whole very positive process; we have to be more fraternal than ever, and we have to accustom the whole Bloc to what we have become accustomed to. Though I am departing a little from the report, I want to inform the comrade that Comrade Salomón was on the verge of being expelled in a case very similar to the comrade's case, but the processes were reversed and the first comrade who sounded the alarm was Comrade Camilo, who sent a friend to listen to a conference of big capitalists and came running to me saying that the problem was serious. I say this so that you will see that there is a common, very, very serious procedure here. This

problem was brought into the last meeting of the Central Committee, it was raised with the comrade this time, it was discussed with the comrade, the comrade adopted a series of measures right away bringing himself back into conformity with the CC and was given a terrible beating. The comrade's response: Yes, I was completely wrong, I boosted the prestige of the bourgeoisie, etc., etc., and the problem was resolved in a very similar way to this one, the resolution, his self-criticism, and all. I mention this so that no one thinks there is a personal disloyalty on the part of Comrade Salomón. There was a time when it looked like he was going to leave the party because he thought that Comrade Camilo had been his friend. I mention it to show that it is an overall method which exists for all sides. And other cases could be cited. I cite this one because it is a symmetrical case.

No. OK, comrades, the only thing else for me to do is congratulate the comrade and point out that the whole party is going to learn that there is really a steel discipline, that a Bolshevik party is an army, it has to fight against the reformist parties, the bourgeois state, the police, the sell-outs, all this, all this is against us, and if we don't have this discipline, this morale, we are completely ruined because we are harassed by all kinds of . . . Comrade Ricardo has done a great deal with this attitude to strengthen this discipline, this party morale of steel.

E.B. Comrade Ricardo, comrades, there are two aspects: first Comrade Ricardo's statement and second what Comrade H. has proposed. He says the resolution should be kept the same pointing out explicitly that the last part of the comrade's statement—where what he asks to be declared disqualified from occupying leadership positions for five more years—should be rejected. He says that this be explicitly rejected, noting at the same time that we ratify the measures suggested and the spirit of the proposed resolution. He also makes four, or two or three more proposals that are in the spirit of the resolution adopted: a fifteen-day vacation for the comrade, that after that he should give a report to the party of his activity for the tendency in Europe, and third that he be at the disposal of the party to be used as a speaker in any place, situation, or activity that the party may request and that the comrade agrees to and feels comfortable with; so we should refer to these aspects. If there is anybody opposed. . .

G.V. Yes, comrades, I had thought I would bring some written questions to this meeting, but I have only this little piece of paper. In the first place, I agree completely with what Comrade Moreno proposes, that the response Comrade Ricardo makes in the first part is a response that really raises my morale. I in particular was somewhat confused, as I think some party comrades were. Second, it allows us to make it clear that we can and are still advancing, at this very meeting and with this very situation, we are advancing in building a party. And I was worried for many reasons, because really, everyone in this party knows the weight Comrade Ricardo has in the organization; second, I was worried at first that there might be a bit of an attitude of rebellion, against the past, represented in a way by Comrade Ricardo. But I think that what has taken place has been mature. Just last night, after the vote on something that may or may not be wrong, we decided without Comrade Ricardo being present, on his petition. The arguments raised by Comrade Ricardo, really, as I see it, were not sufficient to reverse that

discussion, above all because it seemed that the comrade had not yet really been able—and that is the truth—to fit into the process we are involved in of building a team. Nevertheless, I think that today we are in a completely different situation. We know the importance of Comrade Ricardo's participation in the party, in the life of the party, the need we have of educating ourselves along with the comrade, that is our desire. I want to make it very clear for Comrade Ricardo that those of us who hold him in high esteem—as do all the comrades in the party—understand that, really, a series of points had to be posed clearly to be able to show the comrade that this advance had really taken place. This is the first point I want to make, which in my view clears the somewhat immediate panorama. We are faced with a series of tasks; many areas, I am sure comrade, that many areas were awaiting Comrade Ricardo's arrival. Awaiting the outcome of the discussions that are developing here. But basically I am referring to those comrades in the party who may be uneasy anyway, although the discussion has only been at this leadership level. But these are things that any comrade who has lived through the process of the Bloc notices, that there are, there were, two movements—the party movement and Comrade Ricardo, who anyway could represent a situation which we had to resolve for that process. This is my initial estimate and I feel very good in this sense.

Second, I was worried, I was quite worried with the situation of the second part. The comrade cannot take the position of having been a victim, because here we have not had a position of victimizing the comrade. After we realized that we had been habitually beating down comrades in the party, I think that that cannot be repeated and that it is not happening now. In this sense I can be, if you will, daring, guaranteeing that there was no intention in any way of beating down. Therefore let's tell the comrade he cannot assume the pose of having been a victim before the organization and before the leadership. This is the only weak point, if the comrade says five years; second, nothing with the magazine, with the editing of the Tendency's magazine. It seems to me we are being presented with a pressure argument, a pressure argument because it is an objective fact, it is an objective fact, that the role that the comrade can play at the level of the Tendency, at the level of *Revista de América*, at the level of the very discussion of a series of points leading up to the convention, is definitive.

R.S. Excuse me, Comrade Gustavo . . .

H. No, of the convention—I don't, well I don't.

R.S. In the statement. . .

G.V. I believe the following. Look, you say Ricardo, you say no more occupying posts other than that of rank-and-file member, not representing the party in any national or international event, not being on the editorial board or writing staff of any of the party's or Tendency's press. I don't understand why the comrade says he won't be on the editorial board or writing staff of the press of the party or of the tendency. In the only thing which we can. . .

H. It has to do with his self-criticism.

G.V. Oh, well, that's why I'm giving my views on something which seems to me to be exaggerated. On something which does not correspond to the situation. On the other hand we should discuss here with the comrade what role will most favor his development and the development of the party and on that basis decide where the

comrade can actually give all that he can to the party, precisely in this period during which it has been said that the comrade shall work with us, etc. There are many things in which we too have to develop. We think that we are in a period of educating a leadership and we want to integrate the comrade precisely in this process within which we surely all have a way to go. So that is my preoccupation. On this, it does not seem to me, or I don't quite understand, why the comrade poses the situation so sharply, but we will clear it up in the course of the discussion, which the comrade, we'll see, it seems to be there is a viable alternative solution.

H. I want to clarify my resolution on two points to make the discussion more precise, because in general I agree with Vivas. But on two points we have differences, or we should be more precise. First my congratulations is for the whole text of the document, because there is unity even though the comrade exaggerates his self-criticism, so it's for the document as a whole. I want to make it clear that what I have said is that we do not accept this, we do not incorporate it in the resolution. If we did include it, what Vivas says would happen, we would be acting as victimizers. Is this clear or isn't it? We do not accept as a resolution what the comrade says. That is what I've said. But the congratulations are for the text as a whole. I don't divide the text in two, is that understood? I don't see a contradiction or anything. In the final analysis there is an exaggeration, but in favor of the party, not of the comrade. Is this clear? If there is a lack of balance it is because the whole emphasis is on the question of the party. Second, I am also against our discussing now where the comrade is going to be assigned. I think that the comrade has to take the fifteen days; the suggested mechanism is the best one. Let him think in peace, let him get his bearings; the comrade has just returned from an exhausting task in foreign countries. Let him rest, and then later, not now; that's all, I want to clear up those two points.

E.B. Is there any other comrade who wishes to speak? I simply want to note my agreement with the position expressed by comrade Hugo and comrade Vivas, on the content of the . . . of the comrade. I also want to express my agreement with comrade Moreno's position with regard to the measures he proposes, and also my disagreement with Comrade Vivas when he says that the comrade's assignment should be discussed and decided here . . . etc., and on the tone of the comrade. That is, I think that Comrade Ricardo's letter, the statement, does not give the impression, does not give me the impression of a victimizer, of a victim. The comrade is very consistent, that is, he notes the mistakes he has committed, which he thinks he has committed, he demands the party impose the severest disciplinary measures, and he demands this due to the character of the mistakes he notes he has committed. So he is consistent and he poses the need for hard measures, as he says further on, or as he recognizes later on. He sees himself deserving of them, therefore, I think that the whole text of the letter is perfectly consistent. And precisely because we think it should not go so far, we ratify the decision presented in the previous minutes, on the character of the disciplinary measures, their duration, and the way in which we think the comrade should relate to the tendency's and party's activities, to the extent that the party needs him and asks him, in common agreement with the comrade and wherever the comrade thinks that he can

contribute most to the party in accord with the spirit of the disciplinary measures which are proposed.

C.G. I agree with everything Eduardo has said. The only point I think should be made clear is with regard to the last phrase, where the comrade says: "I declare myself unfit for five years to hold any positions other than rank-and-file member, or to represent the party at any national or international event, or to take part in the editing or writing of party or tendency magazines." What I believe is that what this expression reflects is an attitude; it is not—it can't be said—that during these five years, if you—if the party—assigns me, I won't take on that responsibility. But rather—this is the way I interpret it—it is an attitude of the comrade in the whole statement. In this sense, then, I think that the congratulations extended by Comrade Moreno are applicable to the whole, for the practical implementation of the resolution. Yes, yes, yes the expression—if we take it like this—is an expression whereby the comrade restricts himself, that is, it is self-imposed disciplinary measures. That is, shall we say, the point, and what we have to say on that is that we do not agree with Comrade Ricardo imposing disciplinary measures on himself, and the terms of the proposal should be put forward by the commission.

H. No, and it is a problem which was (not) completely cleared up, which I cleared up and which was (already) forgotten. That is why congratulations on the whole document are justified.

E.B. Does any other comrade wish to speak? Comrade Valencia.

L.C.V. Yes, also simply to ratify my—the—characterization which Comrade Hugo, Comrades Eduardo and Camilo basically have made of Comrade Ricardo's attitude. I think that it is not superfluous to note that we should consider this a victory not only for ourselves, but for the whole party and Comrade Ricardo himself. By this triumph, in the first place, we have consolidated. This is an important step; I think that it was a test, a decisive moment, it was a moment that showed we have a Bolshevik leadership, consolidated into a team. That is the first aspect I want to stress. In the second place, that due to the history, the tradition, the importance of the role Comrade Ricardo has played in the party, for us it was not only that . . . but it is also a step which allows us to win the comrade to this building, and to our own process, our own course and I interpret the comrade's attitude as a step forward on Comrade Ricardo's part in this process and, that therefore he will find in the party and in this leadership all the conditions necessary for us to move forward in that joint dynamic toward building a cohesive team. With all the observations that the comrades have made, basically I wanted to make those points and I also agree that in preserving the spirit of Comrade Ricardo's statement as a whole, we should only keep the resolution points which the commission's documents represents, therefore not accept the comrade's last part.

G.J. I agree that we should keep the resolution as presented by Comrade Hugo. I think that what we have to keep is indeed compatible with the very resolution in the declaration that Comrade Ricardo has presented. And on the last part, well besides what Comrade Camilo has said, we also cannot accept it, in part because it is the leadership itself that must decide when the comrade can be reintegrated, or when he should be reintegrated, or when

he should return to the leadership or any other post that he may be assigned. The comrade should not be the one to say that for five years he won't occupy leadership posts. So I agree with Comrade Hugo's resolution.

E.B. Any other comrades? Then if there is no one else we will go on to vote on the resolution that has been presented with the clarifications made by Comrade Moreno and adding the rejection of the last part of Comrade Sánchez proposal; so, are there any comrades opposed to this resolution?

L.C.V. One question, Hugo, to clarify something, your motion is that we should add the question of the vacation?

H. No, that is a separate resolution, they are all separate, that is unchanged.

E.B. Any opposed? Approved unanimously. Let's go on then to consider Comrade Moreno's proposals, which are, first that the comrade be given a fifteen-day vacation, second, that after that period he present a report of his activities for the tendency in Europe, and third, that he be kept in mind for any of the party's activities, including activities in the election campaign; these are the three motions. Comrades opposed to the three motions?

H. With a brief amendment, you all consider whether it is in accord with your customs or not, that a large meeting for the comrade to report be held in Bogotá, which can be widened to the rest of the party. It should also have the character of a social reception for the comrade. Does this agree with Colombian customs, or not? It is part of Argentine customs, with drinks and everything.

R.S. Better that it should be kept out of the customs.

E.B. Very well, comrades, anyone opposed to the proposal? Approved unanimously.

J.R. First I have to point, that the secretariat be authorized to discuss—because there is a situation that the comrade, because we had been paying for the comrade's apartment, adjusting it to the salary of \$3,500; he'd be left with \$1,300 to live on, which is physically impossible. So we should discuss this in the secretariat.

H. I agree, that should be solved between the tendency and the secretariat, that this three months resolution be flexible; the comrade has to know that he should present his needs and how they should be solved.

H. Can I keep this Julio? Can I take it or not? Because, since it is numbered, it gives me the impression that I can't.

J.R. Let's take note on these documents that one is missing.

K. I want to, something is left out, and that is that the executive committee has to, what is the nature of the information that is going to be presented to the party, whatever it is.

H. I think that is very good to raise, very good, because Ricardo's here, we have to resolve this with Comrade Ricardo.

K. Undoubtedly one thing is what is decided in the Executive Committee, but this is a decision for the party, so this cannot simply remain as a resolution without the party's knowing it. In the first place because it must know this. If not, what meaning would a disciplinary measure in the highest leadership body have if the party is not aware of it?

H. From this point on the disciplinary measure must appear small, saying that with the agreement of the comrade, etc. The problem, and I ask for time to think it

over, for Comrade Ricardo also to think it over, when he returns in another fifteen days we can discuss it.

K. In the second place, because anyway . . .

H. It is a very important point.

K. The comrades are expecting to hear something. They know that Comrade Ricardo returned. In other words they know that in the past three days something has happened here. I think that a comrade who has been in Europe for months, and the comrade comes, and, undoubtedly the leadership has to report on what has happened. If this is not reported, an atmosphere will be created . . . of people not knowing what is going on, what it is we have decided.

H. My concrete motion is that it be a small item, two or three lines in the internal newspaper, no, in the internal bulletin, two or three lines, no more. Later on the information to the members of the Central Committee, to the ranks, in the form we decided. Yes, it doesn't go to the ranks, and it stays with us, give the comrade and the whole bureau time, I ask for it personally, if that concession can be made to me, you will give me time to think over the problem.

C.G. Excuse me, I think that . . . Comrade Hugo's proposal, but then in that case that we shouldn't put it in the internal bulletin until we have arrived at a joint decision, because it seems to me that it would, that it would create

H. Does the joint decision mean the whole resolution?

C.G. No, no, that once it is decided precisely how it is going to be posed to the party, then at that time it can be printed in the internal bulletin, but that there's no point in printing a brief note. Not a note; rather, in common agreement with Comrade Ricardo, he has been disciplined with a separation under such and such conditions.

H. When are you going to take the vacation? Right away? Tomorrow? Day after? Now? How do you feel? Or are you going to stay two, three days, four, are you staying?

R.S. Yes, a few days.

H. Well, before the comrade leaves it should be arranged, three or four days, because some news has to appear; there are two contradictory requirements. Is this clear?

C.G. I propose that we not resolve this now.

H. So we'll wait three or four days, OK. On Monday we can resolve this.

C.G. Will you be here on Monday?

H. No, even if he's not here. He'll come and talk with us before he leaves. We'll talk. He'll say I see it thus and so. But you'll agree before leaving to come and talk to the secretariat.

R.S. Fine, I'll agree, I'll agree with whatever form you adopt.

H. You think about it, think about it.

R.S. I'm not going to start thinking . . . excuse me.

H. No, it's all right, Ricardo . . . we . . . very careful

R.S. Yes, comrades, in the best way

K.G. On Monday.

R.S. On Monday . . . the next internal bulletin appears.

H. I ask, if you want to vote now, comrades? I'll abstain. I am not clear.

K.G. Excuse me for the following, comrade, I had a proposal. And it was on the basis that, in the first place, the materials would be withdrawn, would be picked up; they are not publishable, not Comrade Hugo's letter nor Comrade Ricardo's letter, neither one of them. What is publishable is the Executive Committee's information. I'll present in it writing . . . surely it'll have a decision on Monday which will say simply: this has to be clear to the whole party. Executive Committee of the Socialist Bloc: The Executive Committee informs the party that it has formulated the following charges against Comrade Ricardo Sánchez, member of the Central Committee, and there listed, well, no, three of them, I didn't think it necessary to list all four, all four could be put down, and all that follows removed . . . that is all. It will say that Comrade Ricardo Sánchez has recognized before the Executive Committee that he has carried out factional acts and he accepts the fact that he deserves the disciplinary measure which the EC deems appropriate. As a result the EC resolves, and the five points are listed, and it ends, the Executive Committee considers that this question is solved, and that this point is of a purely informational character for the membership, all discussion on this question being closed. In other words, this is not to open discussion in the Zone committees and cells, but merely is informational and the discussion is closed and the materials are withdrawn. That's all.

G.J. Eduardo, I propose that we discuss or approve the motion that this be discussed, that people should think about it, that we discuss this at the next meeting.

K.G. OK

H. For example, there is a very good maneuver to avoid its being discussed among the membership . . . it is to report that everything has now passed to the Central Committee to be ratified or not, and that after the Central Committee meeting there will be a report. This is why we have to think about it a lot, because there will be, you are very accustomed to super-democracy, and there will be grippers who will begin to raise problems, if I'm not mistaken.

E.B. Yes, I think we should table the motion and on Monday we will discuss it, we will exchange ideas. Is there anyone who disagrees with our deciding on Monday and that it be published in the internal bulletin the following week? Very well comrades.

*The Spanish word "caraterización" has been rendered literally as "characterization." However, here and later the context suggests it is being used in the sense of "political evaluation."

APPENDIX C

Platform of the Pro-Bolshevization Tendency Formed at September 1977 PST Convention

The undersigned, members of the PST Executive Committee, consider:

1. That in the past period, especially during recent weeks, it began to become apparent that there were comrades in the party who manifest their dissatisfaction with the PST's course and make accusations against the leadership, calling it bureaucratic, Stalinist, antidemocratic, disloyal, and functioning as a clique;

2. That the person who has most inspired and organized these criticisms has been Comrade Ricardo Sánchez, who has already been sanctioned for previous factional activities;

3. That the attacks made by these comrades reflect a phenomenon which is developing inside the organization: sectors of the organization reject any change and, because of their inertia or for class reasons, yearn for the old Socialist Bloc, a student and teacher organization that discussed a lot and intervened very little, a disorganized party in which an elite of leaders and members were doing whatever they liked;

4. That it is no accident that it is Comrade Ricardo who most inspires and organizes this kind of attack, and also no accident that, four months after having voted his sanction, he has yet to take a step along the basic line that would allow its reconsideration: to give up his past social milieu of coffeehouse and bohemian intelligentsia and root himself both socially and politically in a milieu more favorable to his political and methodological development.

We decide:

To constitute ourselves as a tendency for the defense and the continuity of the Bolshevization of the party and to invite all delegates present at the convention to support the following points:

1. For the ratification of the general line of the policy adopted by the leadership of the party.

2. For the election of a totally homogeneous leadership

in which the minority will not be proportionally represented, in accordance with the traditional statutory norms of the Fourth International.

3. In the event that we receive a majority at the convention, for the election of the comrades chosen by the tendency as the exclusive leadership of the party. If we don't win a majority, for the refusal to take any responsibility in the leadership in order that the full responsibility for leading the party falls completely on the shoulders of the new leadership.

4. All members of the tendency have full autonomy on the subjects to be dealt with at the convention, except for the "report on activities" and "election of leadership," points on which they pledge themselves to apply tendency discipline.

Members of the tendency reserve the right to admit new members. The tendency reserves its right to present new documents. This is a first draft which can be modified or supplemented in the framework of its general line.

5. It is possible, if not inevitable, that some comrades may reflect positions which tend to draw the party backward to an already bypassed stage, since they cannot or will not adapt themselves to a party which is recruiting a lot of workers, in which the leadership is selected fundamentally on the basis of its militant commitment and not its polemical abilities, in which discussion is a tool for intervention and not a goal in itself, and in which there is genuine centralization and Leninist discipline.

6. It is necessary that the convention culminate the present stage of Bolshevization of the party and discuss in a sincere and fraternal way the criticisms made to the leadership by unsatisfied comrades, in order that our highest body categorically confirm its full and unconditional support to the present leadership's Bolshevization policy so that it can be further deepened after the convention.

APPENDIX D

October 15, 1977, Letter to the Executive Committee and Control Commission of the PST

By Olga Cifuentes

Bogotá
October 15, 1977

Executive Committee
Control Commission

Comrades,

I find it is necessary to address a few points of clarification to you on my participation in the party convention. I have been motivated to make these points after reading Internal Bulletin No. 35 in which I read two letters that refer to the case in point: one letter from Comrade G.J. and another from Comrade Camilo G. Comrade G.J. asks clarification on a so-called revelation in which she was called a factionalist, and in which the person responsible for proving this factionalism was myself; as became clear at the convention, nothing was proved at all.

All the above requires a genuine, honest explanation of what happened. While it is true that the discussion was clarified at the convention, I personally have not had it clarified for me. How can someone carry out work when the person doing the work is demoralized?

In this case, myself. Furthermore, a particular case like mine, that of a rank-and-file member, reflects a general situation that can bring the party to disaster if attention is not at least called to the way in which the process of Bolshevization is being carried out.

1. Several months ago I spoke with Comrade R.S. on different questions, centering mainly on the Aerocivil problem, smuggling of drugs, coffee, and tangos. Let me state that all these conversations were informal and there was no intention at all of forming a tendency or faction. And if I said at the convention that these were not just some kind of living-room gatherings, it is because these conversations did not take place over bottles of wine with loud music playing, but were quite solemn and serious.

2. In cell meetings I had asked the members of the

leadership (Manuel Manotas and Gerardo) to inform us about the case of Comrade R.S. in Europe and the comrades gave us no information at all, giving democratic centralism as the reason. We also insistently requested ideological education for our cell. This request was ignored, reinforcing the political ignorance, which was later to have repercussions (at the convention) in the form of political confusion, lack of clarity on the implications of the factional debate, not only on my part but also among other comrades.

3. Not having attended the first session of the convention, on Saturday night I was at a meeting with Comrades Manuel Manotas and Gerardo, at which I was informed that Comrade R.S. had been wasting the organization's money in Europe bathing on the beaches of Greece, that Comrade S.R. was a bureaucrat, that Comrade G.J. had messed up all the work in the southwest, and that concerning the situation on the cultural front, this front would be lost for the revolution because of Comrade C.R.'s orientation.

4. All this information, which arrived very irregularly, and which we had formally requested in the cell, it being denied us on the basis of democratic centralism, was respected as coming from the comrades in the cell leadership.

5. In face of this, and because what was most important was to "rescue the party from the assassins who were going to kill it," anything was justified. I was not lied to, but all the "clarifications" about the "petty-bourgeois student sect" could not have led me to any other conclusion.

Being better able to understand the situation now, I see the above as the fruit of constricted study and democracy in the cells.

Fraternally,
s/Olga Cifuentes

APPENDIX E

September 30, 1977, Letter to the Executive Committee and Control Commission of the PST

By Gladys Jiménez

Bogotá
September 30, 1977

Executive Committee
Control Commission

Comrades,

During the PST founding convention, Comrade Camilo, political secretary of our party, in the name of the "Pro-Bolshevization Tendency," presented a denunciation accusing me of having held a secret meeting with Comrade Olga present, in which Comrade Ciro, Comrade Ricardo, and other unidentified comrades in the organization were also present.

The meeting was said to have been on the night of Friday, September 23, after the rally which opened the convention. At that meeting I am supposed to have laid out the need for a secret faction whose objective was to rescind the disciplinary measures against Comrade Ricardo Sánchez. In the course of the convention the absolute and total falsehood of this charge was completely evident.

Since Comrade Camilo did not correct himself in any way even after he heard Comrade Olga's declaration that she had not been at any such meeting, but that it was simply a supposition, I am presenting the Executive

Committee and the Control Commission the following petition.

I consider that leveling charges at a member of the national leadership without backing them up with clear proof is a question of revolutionary and proletarian morality. In that the charges are false, I consider it to be the duty of any member, even more so of a leader of the party, with real Bolshevik morality to immediately correct himself and to offer a self-criticism before those to whom he made those charges.

I therefore ask that Comrade Camilo, political secretary of the PST, make a declaration to the party rectifying this false accusation and that the leadership express itself rejecting these methods within the party. I ask that the Control Commission carry out an investigation which would be made known to those who heard the charges, with its results, on what it considers to be an irresponsible attitude which undermines the respect and the confidence the party has for members of its leadership.

This action, which is an affront to the party and revolutionary morality, must be investigated by the commission, the person or persons responsible should be sanctioned, and the unity of the party which is in danger, should be defended.

Fraternally,
Gladys Jiménez, Member of
the Executive Committee

Statement by Camilo González (Published October 4, 1977)

Comrade Gladys in her letter to the Executive Committee and the Control Commission asks that I set forth to the party my position on the incident which came up at the convention with regard to Comrade Olga's declarations, which I reported on.

Before the Central Committee meeting preceding the convention, Comrade Gladys showed me her letter in which she accuses me before the control commission for having affronted party morality in that I made a denunciation which turned out to be false and that I did not present a self-critical clarification. I told the comrade that I thought there was no point in reopening a question which had been done away with during the convention, that in my view the matter had been cleared up, and that what was important now was to dedicate ourselves to strengthening the party among the masses, working with the line which had been unanimously approved. I recommended that she not present that letter since it would not help the party in any way. I informed Comrade Eduardo of this conversation at the Central Committee meeting itself, through a note which I also showed to Socorro, Edgar, and

Roberto who were near me in the CC sessions.

Since in spite of the personal conversations and the discussion in the Executive Committee Comrade Gladys insists on presenting her letter, I want to specify my position in line with what I said at the Executive Committee meeting.

1. In front of about 200 comrades, Comrade Olga in a meeting of the Pro-Bolshevization Tendency declared that on Friday the 23, after the meeting at the Teatro Lux, she had been invited to a meeting in which what was discussed was how to question the party leadership. She reported that at that meeting there was a group of party members as well as Comrade Ricardo Sánchez; she said that since she was new she did not know [him] very well, but she alluded to comrade Panesso. When asked if Gladys and Ciro were present at the meeting, the comrade very clearly said yes they were there.

Let me make it clear that never before that meeting had I spoken with the comrade. I arrived late to the meeting and I was informed of the situation; I approached the

comrade and only said to her: comrade, report during the meeting on the meeting that you attended on Friday.

2. At the convention when Sunday's session began, I asked for the floor and I passed on the information which Olga had given. As is recorded on the tapes, I did not make any additional comments.

3. Later, Comrade Olga asked for the floor, asked that Gladys excuse her, and reported that indeed she had been asked to a meeting; that for a long time they had been talking to her about this; that the meeting which she had attended was not any "parlor meeting," etc. But she made it clear that as for Gladys's and Ciro's presence, that that was a conjecture on her part as to their being involved in the same thing.

It was made clear before the entire convention that Comrade Olga had corrected herself and that therefore at the meeting—proven to have been held on Friday—neither Gladys nor Ciro had been present. It was also made clear that we had heard one thing at the tendency meeting and something else at the convention.

The point here is not to refer to the problem as a whole, which was debated at the convention, that is why I limit myself to clarifying the facts concerning this particular incident.

APPENDIX F

Balance Sheet of the PST Convention, From PST Internal Bulletin No. 35, October 4, 1977

The PST's founding convention is the result of a year of Bolshevization of the old Bloque Socialista [Socialist Bloc—SB]. In other words it closes a first stage of the process of Bolshevization, the stage of the break with the old centrist, student, petty-bourgeois bloc and it places us on the road of a Trotskyist organization which includes in its structure and its method of party building, as well as in its political development, the best of the traditions of the Fourth International and of the workers movement.

In making this statement we are not denying the errors we have made in this period, the problems which remain to be solved, or the conflicts which exist in our organization. We do not wish to hide any of this; to the contrary, we are interested in pointing it out and in characterizing it in order to deepen the organizational transformation and advance politically. But we do want to make it clear that what is dominant, what characterizes the process of development of our organization, is the break with the method of the old Bloc and the adoption of a Bolshevik method. The convention is the best proof of this statement. The inaugural rally, the resolutions adopted, and the process of the tendency struggle that took place, all are elements which prove how far we have advanced and what lies ahead.

In the first place, the opening session of the convention summed up the organizational transformation. Attendance was close to 3,000 people and the composition of those attending expressed the outreach of the party's politics and the practical results of the structural work with the rank and file which we carry out. In attendance or represented were close to 600 worker and socialist precandidates that we have in the country; all the Bogotá

I must admit that in presenting the denunciation to the convention I acted lightly, in an irresponsible manner, since I should have investigated the matter further, spoken in detail with the comrade, and arrived at a precise characterization of her and of the information which she had transmitted to us.

4. I want to make it clear that while Comrade Olga's information finally established that neither Gladys nor Ciro were at said meeting, the same information does point to the fact that faction meetings and activities were promoted during the period leading up to the convention in which party members participated.

5. I insist that the convention allowed us the opportunity to clear up these problems within the party and that it is completely incorrect, part of a wrong method of functioning, to wish to draw out the conflicts indefinitely, instead of turning toward the masses to strengthen the party and thus solve the problems which may arise or persist. It would be a sad factional method to now seek all the excuses to rekindle within the party the different problems which were debated at the convention.

Camilo González

branches and almost all the branches in the rest of the country went over their quotas, and they went over on the basis of the mass work we are doing. That is, those in attendance were in large proportion workers and this was the result largely of the work with the rank and file that the party carries out, armed with the electoral policy and with the policy which we implemented for the Citizens National General Strike (CNGS) of September 14.

There is another series of details about the opening session which speak well of the party besides those already mentioned regarding attendance and composition. The speakers' remarks—which were full of content, with precise characterizations, direct, clear in form—represent a notable advance not only for the party but also for the Colombian left. The demands, the enthusiasm and the mystique of those in attendance, as well as the length of the event and the agenda, clearly show that we were not attending a parliamentary rally or an expression of the petty bourgeoisie, but a class event, a workers rally. That it was a workers rally was made possible by the fact that it was organized and carried out by a workers party—the PST. We are that party because we have been carrying out the Bolshevization of the party successfully.

The success of the event is explained also by the line we approved at the Central Committee meeting of July of this year. At that time we said that we were going to plan the party's convention while we were going all out in the election campaign and the CNGS activity. In this sense the discussion and preparation of materials was not going to be the best possible due to the quantity of tasks which would be demanded by the practical activity surrounding the campaign and the CNGS. Nevertheless, in general

there was a good discussion of the materials which were turned in early enough, mainly of the program, the organizational theses, and the theses on women. There was one omission, due to shortcomings of the EC; the national document or political report which had been written a month before the convention was not published early enough and therefore could not be submitted to discussion and approval by the convention so it was referred to the CC.

The rally is not all. The convention deliberations and resolutions adopted clearly show the political and theoretical advances achieved. These advances are accompanied by a high degree of ideological and political unity within the party, which the convention strengthened and deepened on a much more solid basis.

The program, the political resolution and the organizational theses were adopted unanimously with small modifications which do not affect them fundamentally. As we noted in the activities report approved by the convention, the organizational theses represent the theoretical conclusions of the Bolshevization. We could also say that the program and the political resolution approved represent the conclusions of a new method in political development. All the documents have a common denominator: they are designed for the masses, that is, to build the party with the masses and not with the vanguard. Therefore, we aim our politics at the masses in order to—by responding to their immediate and most felt needs—lead them towards their deepest and most general historical objectives: the seizure of power, the dictatorship of the proletariat, and the socialist revolution.

This common denominator is what explains the great organizational successes which were ratified by the convention. These successes in turn are backed up by the great political abilities of our leadership. The policy on trade-union unity approved by the November Central Committee now has, in the CNGS, its practical manifestation: the upsurge in the workers and peoples struggles is what makes trade-union unity possible and in this process the UTC [Unión de Trabajadores de Colombia—Union of Colombian Workers] and the CTC [Confederación de Trabajadores de Colombia—Confederation of Colombian Workers] play a very important role. It is not true that trade-union unity goes through the CSTC [Confederación Sindical de Trabajadores de Colombia—General Trade-Union Confederation of Workers of Colombia] and the independent unions. The policy of the struggle front on March 4 demonstrated its correctness in the big united mobilization in solidarity with the USO [Unión Sindical Obrera—General Workers Union] and the FECODE [Federación Colombiana de Educadores—Colombian Teachers Federation], and led the executive committee plenum of the USO to say that it was thanks to the initiative and policy of the SB. The characterization and orientation we made with respect to the CNGS and the proposal which we are now making are also correct. First the struggle for unity of the four trade-union federations and against the sectarianism of the CP and the CSTC, then the practical orientation for the day of the strike which allowed us to be in the front ranks throughout the whole country, and now the proposal for a national meeting and a plan of struggle for the four federations and all the political, trade-union, and mass organizations that participated in the strike have been generally correct, have armed the party, and linked it

closely to the masses and mainly to the workers movement. We will not belabor here what the electoral policy has been. We have already drawn several balance sheets and we have daily proof of its correctness and effectiveness in the ordinary activities of the party.

When we have strayed from the common denominator—the masses, aiming our policy and our activity toward them—we have committed grave errors. May 1 and the policy with which we participated side by side with the MOIR [Movimiento Obrero Independiente y Revolucionario—Independent Revolutionary Workers Movement] and Consuelo de Montejó's MIL, abandoning the labor demonstration of the CSTC and other trade-union organizations is the first sign. The second, which was already noted at the July Central Committee meeting, is the way we carried out the first stage of the election campaign. Our activity was limited to superstructural agitation and propaganda of our politics. We forgot that it was necessary to do work among the ranks, to concretize our line, to carry it out in practice. We made letters to the leaderships of the workers parties and their press the main axis of our work. We forgot the masses and returned to old student-type, petty-bourgeois practices. These are some of the exceptions which also confirm, negatively, the statement which has been made: the Bolshevization is not only manifested in organizational advances; it is backed up and expressed also in a new method of developing and applying our line.

So much for the unanimity at the convention. In the activities report, that is, in the balance sheet of the activity and characterization of the present situation by the party and its leadership there were two positions expressed, which led to the formation of a tendency "for the defense and continuity of the party's Bolshevization." This tendency was made up by the majority of the EC and of the full delegates to the convention (74 out of 88). What is the significance of the debate between the tendencies which took place at the convention? What class positions does it correspond to? What does it mean in the process of Bolshevization?

Let us begin by stating that the struggle which took place at the convention was the expression of the intense debates which days earlier were posed in the EC over the two aspects which have been noted. But the struggle at the EC was the struggle of two sectors in the party and it expressed the uneven development which has taken place in the process of Bolshevization. On the one hand one sector, the minority, resists this process and questions the methods imposed by Bolshevization by putting the leadership into question. On the other hand, the majority of the EC and of the convention stands by the whole method imposed by the Bolshevization and the leadership which has oriented the process.

The two positions are clearly expressed in the activities report on which point the minority presented a counterreport. The majority's report was approved with 72 votes in favor, 13 opposed, and one abstention. The counterreport won 13 votes in favor, one abstention, and 72 votes against. But they were also extended to the election of the national leadership and to the decision on the participation of Comrade R.S. with voice at the convention. There were 3 organizational points, rather 3 points where what was being considered was the method of party building, the method which began to be applied one year ago at the

start of the campaign to Bolshevize the party. What was at stake at the convention were two methods of party building; one that of the old Socialist Bloc, the other that of the PST.

Those who questioned the party leadership did so pointing out that it was weak politically, used Stalinist methods, was bureaucratic, limited democracy in the EC and in the party, and that it functioned as a clique to the point of having converted the EC into a merely formal body inasmuch as the decisions were made outside of that body. Nevertheless, they said they agreed with the process of Bolshevization.

What the comrades were questioning were the fundamental elements of the process which the party went through. This was being questioned insofar as:

a) it denied the fundamental principles of democratic centralism set down in the organizational theses and which were applied during the convention. Actually, the convention becomes a highly democratic event which is the concrete expression of the democracy which reigns within the party. The minority participated in the convention with all the necessary guarantees to express its points of view and under the same conditions as any comrade of the party's majority. The convention denies the characterization which the comrades present. A bureaucratic leadership cannot carry out a democratic convention. What was really being questioned was the need for a strong, highly centralized leadership with authority, such as is stated by the organizational theses. On the other hand, it was forgotten that the party is not a place for free discussion or for the expression of individuality, but that it is the main instrument for proletarian revolution which demands the systematic submission to party discipline. To submit oneself to party discipline while always fostering discussion within the party, criticism of the policy established by the party, criticism which should be raised in the proper bodies and always on the basis of the organization's practical activity. This is how we exercise party democracy, always as a function of the class struggle, always to act with the masses, and not to hold back the party's action.

b) but, in addition, the type of party we want to build and the type of members the party should have was being put into question. We have said that we want an action party and that we want to build a party of activists. Whoever pays his dues, attends meetings regularly, carries out his political assignments as set by the party, and applies the party's policy from day to day is a member of the party and has rights in the party. It is not sufficient to accept the program. It is necessary that this acceptance be translated into revolutionary action, ever since the Third International. Activists of this type, leaders who can best apply this line, who can best and most effectively build the party are what the PST wants. It is not their history within the party, the past, or their intellectual capacity that defines activists, nor does this define a leader. Two such positions were expressed during the discussion on whether or not Comrade R.S. should have voice at the convention. One again posed some of the old criteria for the party membership, those related to intellectual ability, comrades' past in the organization, and the theoretical contributions of the comrades. The other stood on the practical activity of the comrades, their activism as the fundamental element. This latter criterion was the one we

implemented in the election of the new national leadership. We systematically evaluated each of the proposed comrades, each of the comrades who had been part of the outgoing national leadership. It was the active fulfilling of assignments and the effectiveness of their accomplishment that determined which comrades would make up the national leadership and which would not. The objective facts based on the party's politics are the basis for any evaluation which we make of the comrades, and this evaluation has to be done periodically in the party. This is another one of the accomplishments of the Bolshevization.

c) On the leadership of the party there were also two counterposed positions. One which stood on teamwork, a division of labor and that each leadership comrade should fulfill a role in the team which has to be evaluated systematically. For these reasons, the activities report by the EC majority stood by the whole leadership which had oriented the Bolshevization process. The process was the result of the work of no one, two or three individuals, but of a team, made up by the EC of the old SB, and the leadership of the BT [Bolshevik Tendency], especially the comrades of the Argentine PST.

What was counterposed to this conception was an individualist conception which denies the work of the team, which attributes achievements and mistakes to individuals, which therefore does not accept teamwork and does not submit to its functioning and discipline.

We were also faced with two methods of carrying out the debate: one based on political characterizations, on defining—on the basis of objective facts and political positions—the class character of the conflicts which were expressed at the convention and, on the basis of these characterizations, drawing practical conclusions. The other was based on not making class characterizations, but rather on rumors, anecdotes, and conversations to raise positions which are not accompanied by practical conclusions. That is, if there is a politically weak leadership which uses bureaucratic, Stalinist methods, which limits democracy, and functions as a clique, why isn't there then a struggle to the death against this leadership? And how can it be explained that this leadership was able to lead the Bolshevization process correctly, was able to build the opening rally at the convention which summed up the process of Bolshevization? Furthermore, what is the class character of this leadership? As Trotsky said: "The opposition opened up a severe factional fight which is now paralyzing the party at a very critical moment. That such a fight could be justified and not pitilessly condemned, very serious and deep foundations would be necessary. For a Marxist such foundations can have only a *class* character. Before they began their bitter struggle, the leaders of the opposition were obligated to ask themselves this question: What non-proletarian class influence is reflected in the majority of the National Committee? Nevertheless, the opposition has not made the slightest attempt at such a class evaluation of the divergences. It sees only 'conservatism,' 'errors,' 'bad methods' and similar psychological, intellectual and technical deficiencies." [Leon Trotsky, *In Defense of Marxism* (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1973), p. 60.]

Those two methods were counterposed. That is why the characterization which the convention approved is that the minority represented the petty-bourgeois, studentist positions of the old centrist Bloc. That was the class

character. Also the convention showed a factional behavior on the part of the minority which did not allow the comrades' positions to be known openly before and during the convention, which would have made the debate richer and more fruitful based on stating clearly the differences and defining the scope of the tendency struggle.

One last point: the minority voted unanimously for the program, the political resolution, the organizational theses. Can a bureaucratic leadership with Stalinist methods produce a correct policy? No! It cannot do so; that is why we believe that the minority had an eclectic political position. Where was the politically weak leadership expressed? In a program approved unanimously?

Once again the convention was faced with two positions, one which reflected traces of the old studentist and petty-bourgeois Socialist Bloc, and the other that of the PST which defends the process of Bolshevization.

The convention favorably resolved this conflict, overwhelmingly approved the positions which defend the process of Bolshevization as a whole, and kept the leadership team which had oriented it successfully, and at the same time encouraged new cadres and deepened the ideological and political unity of the party.

The convention armed us with a line and a method of party building aimed at the masses which are the best response to the liquidationist positions which are beginning to be expressed in other political groups (the URS [Unión Revolucionaria Socialista—Revolutionary Socialist Union], for example, faced with the strength shown by our party. Now it is necessary to apply this line and to apply one of the principles approved at our convention: the tendency struggle is over. In proposing dissolution of the tendency we do so struggling for the unity of the party on the basis of the criteria laid out by Trotsky in *In Defense of Marxism*:

"... If the opposition is a petty-bourgeois tendency does that signify further unity is impossible? Then how reconcile the petty-bourgeois tendency with the proletarian? To pose the question like this means to judge one-sidedly, undialectically and thus falsely. In the present discussion the opposition has clearly manifested its petty-bourgeois features. But this does not mean that the opposition has no other features. The majority of the members of the opposi-

tion are deeply devoted to the cause of the proletariat and are capable of learning. Tied today to a petty-bourgeois milieu they can tomorrow tie themselves to the proletariat. The inconsistent ones, under the influence of experience, can become more consistent. When the party embraces thousands of workers even the professional factionalists can re-educate themselves in the spirit of proletarian discipline. It is necessary to give them time for this. That is why comrade Cannon's proposal to keep the discussion free from any threats of split, expulsions, etc., was absolutely correct and in place." [Ibid., Pathfinder Press, pp. 61-62.]

All efforts on the part of the leadership, the cells, and the members, have to be aimed at studying how we are going to apply the policy which has been approved, how we can correct and perfect it through systematic evaluation and day-to-day discussion. The stage which now opens before the party is one of expansion among the masses applying the election policy. That is, we are going to broaden our periphery, we are going to increase the number of sympathizers, we are going to strengthen the current of opinion which is coming forth in favor of socialism and of our party. In this expansion effort there is one central objective which we posed at the convention as one of the fundamental tasks that it is necessary to deal with in the election campaign and financial campaign: it is necessary to proletarianize the party. We have made a big effort so that at the end of the election campaign we have a large number of blue- and white-collar workers in our ranks, so that also in our composition we become a workers party, that is one of the fundamental requirements to deepen the Bolshevization of the party.

To proletarianize the party, to extend the radius of our action and our influence, to win new members, these are the tasks which are posed before us in the immediate future. To carry them out successfully we have to go all out for action among the masses. That is why we want to insist upon the need to stop the tendency and faction fight within the party. Practice, the transformation into action among the masses of the whole policy which has been approved, will be the best judge of the line and the leadership approved at the PST founding convention.

APPENDIX G

Activities Report Presented at September 1977 PST Convention

By E. Barragan,
Organizational Secretary of PST

In voting on the program, political resolution, theses on the structure and method of party building, and on the statutes, the founding convention of our party oriented the daily activity of our party bodies and members both tactically and strategically. This orientation, which the Central Committee also helped set, made the election

campaign the axis of party activities and the financial campaign its central task.

This activities report is the Executive Committee's evaluation of the policy decided upon, its practical application, including the leadership's role, and the organizational functioning of the party in the two months between

the convention and this CC meeting. What we are doing and should do in the CC is to put in practice one of the principles of our organizational theses which we stress in the balance sheet of the convention: that the practical application of our policy, its daily and continuing evaluation, and the correction of errors will be the standard for judging the positions adopted at the convention. This is the party national leadership's first opportunity to perform this task, which is a concrete expression of the party's internal democracy.

A Correct Policy

1. *Our electoral policy.* While we have emphasized over and over again the correctness of our electoral policy, which we will discuss more deeply under the election campaign at another point on the agenda, it is necessary to single out here the progress we have made in the two months since the convention; it has exceeded our previous expectations, and every day opens up broader possibilities for our party.

The tour Comrade Socorro made through Huila, Tolima, Caldas, Risaralda, Antioquia, and the Costa region has been a big success, both in the large number of workers who attended the meetings we held and in the usefulness to the party of the regional conferences that were held. About 20,000 persons came around to learn the politics of the PST in these places and there are other cities and departments where we have now started work in the election campaign or where big new opportunities are opening up for us.

Some other information is worth adding which is secondary but nevertheless indicates the success of our policy. For example, there are the polls taken by the daily *El País* in Cali and by *Coldatos* in Bogotá. The first showed that among the presidential candidates, Socorro is in the running alongside Belisario and Lleras; the second indicates that our candidate will get 10,000 votes in Bogotá, more than Piedrahíta, Holmes, and Agudelo.

Added to this significant response we are getting from the masses of people is the support from the LCR and Ruptura to our electoral policy, to Socorro's candidacy, to the national convention, and to the election platform. The URS, in spite of the sectarian attacks it makes in *Manifiesto*, has begun talks with our party, and rank-and-file sectors of it are beginning to gradually come around to our positions. In addition to indicating the correctness of our election policy, these endorsements are a new practical and positive demonstration that the organizations on the extreme left of the workers vanguard see us as having a policy aimed at the masses and implemented boldly among the masses.

From the few facts presented here, to which could be added an analysis of the support committees we formed, the comrades won to the party, the precandidates secured, the expansion to new cities and departments, and the increased number of papers sold, we can say that our electoral policy is making inroads among the masses and that the PST is becoming a major pole winning the sympathy of an important, though embryonic, sector of the mass movement.

2. *Our policy in the mass movement.* The convention approved a political resolution, which was later published in the newspaper, outlining the changes and processes

opened up by the Citizens National General Strike (CNGS) and indicating its limits and difficulties. A number of slogans and tasks followed from this analysis. The joint document, the united plan of struggle, and the national trade-union gathering which would approve it and consider a new Citizens National General Strike were the main elements of this policy. We added slogans in favor of a single workers federation and against the reactionary two-party constituent assembly. Later, in the election platform, the internal bulletin, and the newspaper, we made the necessary tactical adjustments in accordance with the conditions of the class struggle.

The adoption of the joint document by the four federations is a success for our policy, which is even more important if we consider that we were the only political organization to raise this demand before September 14 and to systematically hold it up as an expression of the gains made in the process of attaining trade-union unity begun with the preparation of the CNGS, and as an expression of the needs of the mass movement. We should also point out how the USO [Unión Sindical Obrera—General Workers Union] and the FECODE [Federación Colombiana de Educadores—Colombian Teachers Federation] accepted without modifications our proposal for a national union gathering and a united plan for struggle, as did a good number of unions, which could have been greater if we had stressed this campaign.

Having a correct analysis of and policy toward the mass movement allowed us to work out a correct orientation in this period, which was confirmed by the mobilization of the eighteenth; this orientation was explained in Internal Bulletin No. 39 and in the EC's evaluation of this mobilization in Internal Bulletin No. 42. We will quote these documents at length. In Bulletin 39 we wrote:

1. The objective conditions for the upsurge still exist. Since the Citizens Strike the working class and the popular masses have maintained their strength: the regime has not launched a counteroffensive leading to a defeat. The economic problems continue to worsen, aggravated by the problems with the coffee bonanza, and as a result the workers' and people's discontent is growing. As we go toward the beginning of the coming year, we will see still broader expressions of protest.

2. During the weeks after the Citizens National General Strike, the mobilization took the form of strike actions for grievances and wages (USO, bank workers, Minhacienda, etc.); violent repressive measures have been used against these sectors, particularly the USO. The USO has been faced with a campaign of annihilation. The labor movement has not responded in solidarity, and the sectors under attack find themselves isolated and uncoordinated and have suffered the sharp blows of some partial defeats.

3. The action of the trade-union bureaucracy in the four federations has been to accommodate to the mass pressure while at the same time *putting the brakes* on the mass struggle. Where the pressure has not been very strong, the bureaucrats have maneuvered to avoid drawing up a concrete plan of struggle and planning actions that would lead to a sharper confrontation with the government. By the behavior of the bureaucrats we can see, on the one hand, that they feel obliged to adapt to the sentiment for unity and the discontent of the workers by forming the CNS [Consejo Nacional Sindical—National Trade-Union Council], with the joint document and by withdrawing

from the national wage board; on the other hand, their foot-dragging attitude shows their character and their ties with the bourgeois parties. Those who took the lead in this activity were the UTC and CTC [Unión de Trabajadores de Colombia—Union of Colombian Workers; Confederación de Trabajadores de Colombia—Confederation of Colombian Workers], but the attitude of the CSTC [Confederación Sindical de Trabajadores de Colombia—General Trade-Union Confederation of Workers of Colombia] is characterized by permanent conciliation.

The purely regional and local aspects, such as the regionalist sentiment (Socorro is from Huila) and the campaign with Don Manuel Vargas (Socorro's grandfather), who opened the meeting in Villavieja and promoted her candidacy "in the name of socialism" as far as Garzón, do not negate our previous statement, but rather complement it insofar as these relations enhanced and built attendance at the meetings, making them more interesting; but they were not at all the decisive factors in the *political and organizational success* of the tour.

The best demonstration of this was the rally on Saturday the twenty-second in the Santander Park in Neiva. We figure conservatively that more than 4,000 persons were there (local newspapers calculated the number at more than 6,000). Workers from all the main factories of Neiva, led by the full shift from SINTRACOLBRAS (De Licorera, Bavaria, Municipio, etc.), teachers in formation chanting their own demands, neighborhood residents, students, and even some peasants from the region formed the main contingent of the rally, qualitatively and quantitatively. The PST rally was four times larger than the CP's with Pernía (the CP hired eight buses, has a membership ten times larger than ours, and has forty years more experience than we working in the region). The Pernía rally was three times the size of the MOIR's [Movimiento Obrero Independiente y Revolucionario—Independent Revolutionary Workers Movement].

The expectant attitude of the crowd before Socorro's speech (the main point of attention for the masses of people), the warm and appreciative reception for Socorro's speech (Comrade Socorro's best speech to date, both agitational and programmatic, complete and coherent—the tape recording, though abridged, gives an idea of this), and the stupendous closing (in which the SINTRACOLBRAS workers had to form a security line around the comrade until she could reach the car opposite the park), complete the picture.

In our evaluation in Bulletin No. 42 we noted:

Assessing the mobilizations in Bogotá and the main cities in the country (Medellín, Cali, and Barranquilla), we can say that they confirm our views. Following the Citizens National General Strike this mobilization shows that a quantitative change has taken place in the degree of mobilization; now many more workers are ready to go into the street. The mobilization in Bogotá was twice the size of the September 1 event; the masses supported the joint document and demanded the resignation of the minister of labor; around 8,000 workers attended, and an enormous contingent was unable to join up because of the blockade put up by the army on all access routes except Tenth Street. So we can reaffirm what we said about the increasing discontent, about the momentum of the Citizens National General Strike continuing, and about the fact that the working class, while it has recently suffered

partial blows as in the case of the USO, has not been dealt a defeat by the government.

At the same time that we note this general aspect, we have to say as well that the mobilization shows serious limitations nationally, which become more clear when we consider that in cities other than Bogotá, the demonstrations were relatively small, even smaller than those before the fourteenth, as happened in Barranquilla and Medellín. While the general tendency is an ascending one, we are going through a phase where the workers' and people's dissatisfaction—which lives on in the Citizens National General Strike—cannot find a leadership capable of pushing the movement forward more decisively; the mobilization was organized bureaucratically, through general calls from the union leaderships but without an effective organization of the ranks.

The contradictory behavior of the CNS was seen, as we have noted, on the one hand in the fact that it issued the call for the eighteenth—which made possible a great mass action that would have been unthinkable without the unity of the four union federations—and on the other hand, in the role the CNS played as a brake in the way it organized the action and above all in the lack of a strategy for the struggle. The federations did not come up with a position for the day that would indicate a perspective for struggle; the only ongoing decision is the postponement of all actions until next year, as in the case of the announced transport strike.

In the context that we have indicated, the demonstration underlines the importance of the CNS, reflecting a broad desire for unity and symbolizing a qualitative change in the possibilities for mobilization. The eighteenth showed how incorrect the opportunists are who criticize our position of supporting the National Trade-Union Council and the joint document. Sectors such as the URS [Unión Revolucionaria Socialista—Revolutionary Socialist Union], which do not understand in the least the tactic of the workers united front, have harshly criticized our party, accusing it of capitulating to the union bureaucrats, criticizing our election platform, which has the extraordinary political merit of making a special point to support the joint document of the four federations.

In the government's behavior in relation to the national day of activity, we have to note a policy of greater restrictions on the rights to hold demonstrations and meetings. It applied the preventive policy of militarization, intimidation, and finally restrictions on the arrival of workers. The methods applied in Bogotá to block the roads are a completely new element that should call our attention to the measures the regime will adopt in the coming upsurge. We also need to note the manipulation of democratic rights. They have certainly been cut back, but the regime has not decided to launch a generalized reactionary counteroffensive (the prohibition of days of protest, detentions, taking over the CNS, etc.).

Though we do not have complete national information, we can note that our party was equipped with a correct analysis of the day of activity and drew up its plans of activity accordingly, keeping in mind the centrality of our election campaign. Among the activities outlined was tying the election campaign work to building the day of protest; our election platform, which we began to mass distribute a week before the mobilization, enabled us best to support the joint document and the day itself; as was

pointed out in an earlier internal bulletin, our agitational focus in all areas became the day of protest; following this line in Medellín in the election rally of more than 1,000 workers, we proposed a resolution to build the day, which was passed; all this shows how our campaign work combined with building the day of protest.

In the mass movement as well, we have carried out a correct policy that equips the party and gives it the initiative in the class struggle. We need to maintain the general lines of our policy without paying less attention to the mass movement, so as to make the tactical adjustments we think necessary in accordance with the changes occurring in the class struggle.

The Practical Application of This Policy

In this period, we face three crucial tasks for the party: the election campaign; the financial campaign; and the situation of the mass movement, which created excellent conditions for strengthening the party.

While there has indeed been a tendency of the party to make progress, which has helped us root ourselves more firmly in the masses, develop a better and broader knowledge of the party, expand to new areas of work, cities, and departments, link with our election policy and win to our policy in the mass movements other political and trade-union organizations, we need to correct some errors and deviations that prevent us from making the maximum gains from the excellent conditions we find in the class struggle, on one hand, and in our party's policy, on the other.

1. In Internal Bulletin No. 41, one of the errors made in applying our policy is pointed out. Though the focus of party activity was designated as the election campaign and the central task the financial campaign, these two tasks were not coordinated in the best way, nor were they related to other party tasks in the mass movement. They were not coordinated because the leadership, the EC, did not present a clear and correct orientation showing the membership that it was possible to relate the financial campaign to the formation of support committees, the winning of new precandidates, or participation in a strike or a mobilization. Lacking a correct orientation in this area, the party let several weeks go by during which it did not put everything into the campaigns and into all areas of work and made the error of being too unilateral in most collectives in the country; thus, for example, Bogotá quickly jumped into the financial campaign but left the election campaign aside; Cali did the opposite, as happened in Neiva and Tolima with the election campaign tour, as we were able to report in the internal bulletin. In Medellín we organized some very good election meetings, but we did not participate in the mobilization of the eighteenth in an organized way in spite of the directive outlined in the internal bulletin.

This difficulty, carrying out in practice the focus of party activity and relating it to all the tasks, is still seen in the weakness of the support committees and the problems we have not yet overcome in linking them to the financial campaign, to election campaign work, and to the mobilization of the eighteenth.

A new factor should be added that, though secondary, is still important. That is the limitations the leadership team had because of the numerous transfers the EC members

had to undergo owing to the needs created by the election and financial campaigns we are carrying out. The organization of the plans for the financial campaign in all the zones and regions, Comrade Socorro's tour, and the needs it created in organization and realization meant that a large number of EC members had to be traveling around the country to ensure the success of the party's policy.

The experience we have gained in these two months and the corrections made by the EC have generally overcome this situation, which we think will be definitively overcome with the plans we are presenting to this meeting for the next few months. It will be sufficient to note here that the election campaign continues to be the focus of the party's activity and that the financial campaign must continue being a focus of the party's activity and seen as one of its central tasks. To these tasks must be added our participation in the mobilizations, strikes, and battles we find in every area of mass work, convincing the support committees to participate in the financial campaign, in all the activities of the election campaign, and in those developing in their mass work.

2. This difficulty in tying together the different party tasks is combined with a mistaken conception of the significance and role of campaigns in party life. Campaigns, particularly the election and financial campaigns, are viewed as activities superimposed on the direct mass struggle, as activities of the party that have nothing to do with present needs and the present situation. Thus, for example, some comrades say that they were unable to carry out the tasks of the financial campaign or election campaign because there are struggles in their area of mass work or because a strike is coming up or because a great deal of activity is taking place in work in the union ranks.

On the contrary, precisely because activity is increasing in the ranks, because a strike is coming up, the financial campaign or election campaign work should be much better, all the more so if the comrade and the party have played a leading role.

We always carry out the party's political campaigns to answer the needs felt by the masses of people, to link ourselves more closely with them, to do it as a single unit and to reach into all corners of the class struggle, above all where there is some manifestation of struggle. This is also how we should see our election and financial campaigns. So we will not tire of saying that it is necessary to link them up with all manifestations of the class struggle, which now offer excellent conditions for our election campaign to penetrate the masses and which help our financial campaign, as Comrade Socorro's tour showed.

3. In the CC that followed the convention, we said we had to take advantage of the financial and election campaigns in order to reach the broad masses, reach out beyond our periphery, and break with the sect mentality that has characterized us for some years. We need to once again emphasize this aspect because we are still only relating to our periphery and have not broken with the sect mentality. The fear of getting financial pledges and taking advantage of the excellent conditions the mass movement offers us, presenting the party audaciously and decisively, is inconsistent with the response our election policy has received and with the many surprises and experiences we have had in the financial campaign. We need to break with the sect mentality and extend our campaigns to the masses audaciously and decisively.

4. We have already noted the effects our policy and activity have had in the socialist political organizations as a result of our correct policy directed toward the masses. With this policy we are beginning to win broad sectors of these organizations. We should continue this orientation without giving in to the vanguardist pressures we are now seeing concretely in proposals such as for the Socialist Front for the next elections. Our point of reference continues to be the masses, so we need to stress the policy of Workers and Socialist Unity candidates in the electoral field, support for the National Trade-Union Council, the proposed plan of struggle, and the national trade-union gathering; that is, the correct policy the party adopted at the convention and has been adjusting in accord with the conditions of the class struggle, a policy whose effectiveness and correctness have been shown time and again.

5. In assessing the mobilization of the eighteenth in Bogotá, we found that we did not raise the fundamental slogans that we had indicated in the internal bulletins and the newspaper. Slogans such as for a united plan of struggle by the four federations, a national trade-union gathering, and down with the constituent assembly occupied a secondary place in our agitation along with, of course, the national workers and socialist unity conference. What happened? Why after saying these would be our central slogans in the mobilization did we not use them fully? Why didn't we take advantage of this excellent occasion to propagandize our policy among the masses of people with correct slogans?

The reason is that we still have not mastered the art of political agitation, which consists of expressing the whole policy of the party at a given moment in two or three slogans and which played a fundamental role in party activity in the view of Lenin and Trotsky. Lenin pointed out: "For that reason, the principal content of the activity of our Party organization, the focus of this activity, should be work that is both possible and essential in the period of a most powerful outbreak as well as in the period of complete calm, namely, work of political agitation connected throughout Russia, illuminating all aspects of life, and conducted among the broadest possible strata of the masses." (*What Is To Be Done?*) [*Collected Works of Lenin*, Volume 5, May 1901-February 1902 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1973), p. 514.] Trotsky added: "To obtain an answer it is necessary to know how to question. Whom? The masses. How to question them? By means of agitation. Agitation is not only the means of communicating to the masses this or that slogan, calling the masses to action, etc. For a party, agitation is also a means of lending an ear to the masses, of sounding out its moods and thoughts, and reaching this or another decision in accordance with the results." (*Whither France?*) [Merit Publishers, pp. 81-82.] "What is important, when the program is definitely established, is to know the slogans very well and to maneuver them skillfully, so that in every part of the country everyone uses the same slogans at the same time. Three thousand can make the impression of fifteen thousand or fifty thousand." (*Writings, 1938-39*, page 52. Quoted by N. Moreno in *A Scandalous Document*.) [Leon Trotsky, *The Transitional Program for Socialist Revolution* (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1974), p. 181.]

This is what we need to do in our agitation: see to it that the party's presence at whatever event in the class strug-

gle has an impact on the masses, an impact produced because we offer an alternative leadership to the masses, through the discipline and unity shown by the party and through its correct and clear slogans.

It is more urgent that we correct these errors in our practical activity now that we are entering a mainly agitational phase of the election campaign, which is the central activity of the party. We are entering a stage of linking up closely with the support committees, extending our activity to new comrades, new areas of work, new cities and departments.

The Internal Regime of the Party

In the "Notes on the General Situation in the Party," which appeared in Internal Bulletin No. 41 of October 16, 1977, which discussed the situation in the party during this period, we presented the following as one of the factors that prevented a better functioning of the leadership and of the party in general: ". . . on the one hand, the de facto continuation and maintenance of positions that the convention had already rejected, and that even the Executive Committee itself focused its attention on in confronting the method of party building and the unfamiliarity with democratic centralism, discussed in the organizational theses adopted by the founding convention of the party." We want to clarify and deepen this statement singling out its importance for the party not only for the present, but also and mainly because it has to do with the principles of building a Bolshevik party.

Our organizational theses note that we want to build a party for political action and the fight against the bourgeoisie, imperialism, and Stalinism. Because of the character of the enemies we face and because we propose to lead the proletariat and the masses of people in the struggle for power, the party must act as one person in the class struggle, with iron discipline, a requirement that originates precisely in the above-mentioned objectives and the character of the epoch we live in. This party must have a solid, cohesive, firm, decisive, centralized, homogeneous leadership that is able to lead this party and the masses in the struggle for power. These are the general criteria unanimously approved by the convention in the organizational theses and that concretize the internal regime in the party statutes and guide the activity and daily functioning of the party.

All these principles become more necessary when the party is carrying out a political campaign of the dimensions of the election campaign. They become more necessary because we need to act in a united way throughout the country and appear before the masses with the force Trotsky was talking about in the above quotation. This situation demands that the leadership act and appear in the same way to the ranks of the party and that all the members and bodies of the party respond to the policy and mechanisms defined by the leadership.

To guarantee the correct application of these principles, to guarantee that the internal regime of the party corresponds to them, and to combat any deviation from this is a fundamental task of the party leadership. This is because in a number of instances a group of comrades has systematically violated the internal regime of the party and has in practice rejected some of the fundamental principles of these organizational theses; it is of fundamental impor-

tance to go over these aspects and to immediately correct the situation that exists in the party.

1. Democratic Centralism

One of the aspects that has been systematically challenged is democratic centralism, that is, one of the fundamental pillars of the Leninist conception of the party and what orients the whole structure and conception of the party that we adopted at the convention.

What do we mean by democratic centralism? We quote the thesis on the method of party building and structure unanimously approved at the convention:

"The party functions on the basis of the principle of democratic centralism, which means that it should have a strong, highly centralized leadership while being governed by the broadest democracy inside the party."

To lead and guide the masses in the struggle for the proletarian revolution, the party must build a strong leadership. The party leadership must manage all the forces at the organization's disposal and is its highest authority. It centralizes all the activity of the party and exercises extensive power in battle. A fundamental requirement of the leadership and a condition for exercising its authority is that it be directly tied to the masses and to the ranks of the party. Without this relationship it cannot lead either or maintain an ongoing dialogue with them, enabling it to feel their needs, uncertainties, and criticisms. This ongoing relationship with the masses and the ranks of the party is what gives it the authority and respect necessary to carry out its functions.

As we have said, the party must guarantee full democracy internally. The need to establish a fluid, direct, and ongoing relationship with the masses, and the need for the party to go through all their experiences with them, provide the basis for the democracy that must be established in the party. For this to be real rather than formal, it is necessary for a permanent relationship to be established between the leadership and the members as well as between the party and the masses who do not belong to it.

Democratic centralism rules the life of the organization and the internal functioning of the party. Concretely, it means that the subordinate bodies are obliged to submit to the higher bodies and that a central leadership with full powers is necessary in the intervals between conventions. It should also be noted that there is full freedom in the party to organize tendencies. This does not mean that tendencies function all the time, which would convert the organization into a federation of tendencies instead of a highly cohesive and politically homogeneous army that strikes "as one person against the class enemy."

This conception which defines the meaning and place of tendency struggle in the party, the character, role, and functioning of the leadership, and the need for an iron discipline throughout the party, orients the whole of the theses and we find it expressed throughout the text.

We were not mistaken in insisting on the need for a centralized party, with iron discipline, which acts as an army of revolutionaries. Are we denying party democracy by doing so? Let's see how Trotsky presented the problem in the "Manifesto of the Fourth International on the Imperialist War and the Proletarian World Revolution":

"Our Program Founded on Bolshevism

"The Fourth International stands completely and wholeheartedly on the foundation of the revolutionary tradition of Bolshevism and its organizational methods. Let the

petty-bourgeois radicals whine against centralism. A worker who has participated even once in a strike knows that no struggle is possible without discipline and a firm leadership. Our entire epoch is permeated with the spirit of centralism. Monopoly capitalism has brought economic centralization to its ultimate limits. State centralism in the guise of fascism assumed a totalitarian character. The democracies more and more attempt to emulate this pattern. The trade union bureaucracy is ruthlessly defending its powerful machine. The Second and Third Internationals are brazenly utilizing the state apparatus in their struggle against the revolution. Under these conditions the elementary guarantee of success is the counterposing of revolutionary centralism to the centralism of reaction. It is indispensable to have an organization of the proletarian vanguard welded together by iron discipline, a genuine selection of tempered revolutionists ready for self-sacrifice and inspired by an unconquerable will to victory. To prepare the offensive systematically and painstakingly, and when the decisive hour strikes to throw the entire strength of the class on to the field of battle without faltering—only a centralized party which does not falter itself is capable of teaching this to the workers.

"Shallow sceptics delight in citing the degeneration of Bolshevik centralism into bureaucratism. As though the entire course of history depended on the structure of a party! As a matter of fact, it is the fate of the party that depends on the course of the class struggle. But in any case, the Bolshevik Party was the only party that proved in action its capacity for accomplishing the proletarian revolution. It is precisely such a party that is needed now by the international proletariat. If the bourgeois regime comes out of the war with impunity, every revolutionary party will suffer degeneration. If the proletarian revolution conquers, those conditions that produce degeneration will disappear.

"In the conditions of triumphant reaction, mass disillusionment, and mass fatigue, in a political atmosphere poisoned by the malignant decomposition of the traditional organizations of the working class, in the midst of heaped-up difficulties and obstacles, the development of the Fourth International of necessity proceeded slowly. Isolated and at first sight much broader and more promising attempts at unifying the left wing have been undertaken more than once by centrists who disdained our efforts. All these pretentious attempts, however, crumbled to dust even before the masses had a chance to memorize their names. Only the Fourth International, with stubbornness, persistence, and increasing success keeps on swimming against the stream." [*Writings of Leon Trotsky 1939-40*, pp. 214-215.]

Trotsky puts all his emphasis on the need for a highly centralized organization—with an iron discipline. This emphasis is due not only to general objectives that the party must attain, but also to the particular conditions of the epoch, imbued with centralism to the marrow of its bones, but bourgeois centralism. We must emphasize and counterpose to it revolutionary centralism!

Further on, Trotsky writes:

"What characterizes a genuine revolutionary organization is above all the seriousness with which it works out and tests its political line at each new turn of events. Centralism is made fruitful by democracy. In the fire of the war our sections passionately discuss all questions of proletarian policy, testing methods, and brushing off in

passing those unstable elements who joined us only because of their opposition to the Second and Third Internationals. Separation from unreliable fellow-travelers is the inevitable overhead expense in the formation of a genuine revolutionary party." [Ibid. pp. 215-216.]

This is how Trotsky understood party democracy and it is how we understand it too: the highly centralized action the party carries out, putting the policy to the test in the class struggle with the necessary evaluation in the organization (in the ranks and the leadership), with a confrontation of the different experiences gained—this is the fundamental exercise of party democracy. "Centralism is made fruitful by democracy." We also are "testing methods" in the election campaign and the financial campaign and we have done so with the policy of the arena for struggle, with the policy of trade-union unity, and with the policy of the Citizens National General Strike.

For us, democracy is not the right to speak about anything at any moment; that is, democracy is not the freedom of criticism in the party which Lenin attacked so sharply in *What Is To Be Done?* Therefore, tendencies and the freedom of tendencies to exist have a specific place in the party, we can freely form them, informing the leadership of their formation, and always forming them on the basis of a political platform, during the pre-convention period; outside this period we cannot form tendencies inside the party without the express authorization of the party leadership. The party is not a sum of factions or political positions; that is why we exercise democracy in the party in this way. To act in a unified way in the class struggle without negating democracy in the party, we must keep up a continuous evaluation and discussion on the results of the practical application of our policy in the mass movement, the policy established by the leadership, which must be the policy approved at the party convention.

In "Discussions With Trotsky," Cannon noted:

"The fundamental question of party organization was dealt with in the faction fight. The discussion posed the question: the nature of our epoch is military; the only serious party is one which aims at power. We have had a double hangover in our party from the past. One, the socialists never dreamed of changing society. They wanted to make protests, but actually a party to change society over was never in their bones. Their concept was a flabby one, Christian socialism. People from the Social Democracy who came to our party had these concepts. Two, our party the world over suffered from over-correction of Stalinist bureaucratism, all the more so due to the petty bourgeois. They were afraid more than anything else of being disciplined. They don't want a regime with firmness or discipline. This was a tendency of Burnham and Shachtman. For eleven years we had a see-saw, half the time for Lenin's conceptions, half the time for the other extreme. When it became serious all we got was a forty-fifty percent compromise. In this fight we had a strong impulse from the rank and file for more discipline, a more serious party. We must devote more time to the concept of the party that flows from the military age. A mish-mash party is good for nothing. To have this idea assimilated into the very bones of the members.

"I think that the party in the eyes of the leading militants should be considered as a military organization. The party forms should be much more considerably

formalized in a deliberate form of hierarchical organization. A strict record of grades of authority in the party. All these things must be deliberately inculcated to build a party able to struggle for power in this epoch. If this is correct we have an opportunity to build it now. One, because there is a real impulse for it from the rank and file. They feel that there is not enough discipline, not enough firmness.

"In the leadership now there is no serious conflict on this conception, a far more serious advance for joint collaboration. No opportunity for weak and faltering elements to capitalize on differences. Formerly this was bad, especially in New York. That was the damnable role of Abern and Shachtman, to pacify the weaklings. Now there is no possibility for that, not in the next period." [Writings of Leon Trotsky 1939-40, p. 286.] We think it is unnecessary to comment on Cannon's conception.

Trotsky and Cannon are completely in agreement with the conception of the Third International: "In order to lead the working class successfully in the difficult and prolonged civil war the communist party must establish iron military discipline in its own ranks. The experience of the communist party which for three years has led the working class in the Russian civil war has shown that without the strictest discipline, without complete centralization, and without the fullest comradesly confidence of all party organizations in the party centre, the victory of the workers is impossible." ("Theses on the Role of the Communist Party in the Proletarian Revolution," adopted by the second congress of the Comintern, *The Communist International, 1919-1943, Documents*, ed. by Jane Degras, vol. 1, pp. 133-34.)

Our insistence on centralism in the revolutionary party and the way we understand party democracy are thus clearly in accord with Leninist conceptions. It is the Bolshevik conception itself.

This is the party leadership's conception of the party. What is the conception of some comrades? We will have to expose one by one the facts that support our statement. Unfortunately, we cannot refer to written materials because they do not exist; and certainly we will be told we are seeing ghosts because there is complete agreement on the position we have put forward on the method of building the party. For that reason we will go into minute detail in this presentation and the analysis and behavior of some comrades in the party.

2. *The Facts and Their Political Significance*

A. Comrade R.S. Comrade R.S. was disciplined by the EC in May 1977 for having carried on factional activity in his political work in the party, accompanied by a disloyal attitude toward the party and its leadership, taking him so far as to hide his real political positions from the EC and CC, which he did not do in his private conversations and correspondence. The documentation published by the EC shows that this body was correct, as did the comrade himself in accepting the disciplinary measure and clarifying his behavior.

In this, two different ways of viewing the party and how to act in the party are at odds. What has the behavior of Comrade R. been from May onward?

Reports by a number of rank-and-file comrades, middle cadres, and one member of the CC are clear: the comrade has kept up his factional attitude and his disloyal behavior in the party; the comrade has continued to hide his real

positions from the party and the leadership, though in his private conversations he wages a systematic campaign against the BT leadership. What the comrade has said in his private conversations he has never said in the leadership meetings of the BT, nor in the EC meetings he has attended, nor has he presented it in writing to his leadership body. It might be argued, as has already been done, that the EC did not request these opinions, that previously, on the contrary, the leadership acted in a sectarian and factional way toward the comrade, that it has not given him specific responsibilities, that it has rejected his articles for the newspaper, etc. Let's look at the leadership's behavior.

The comrade has given seminars in Bogotá, Ibagué (on two occasions), Neiva, Cali, and Pasto with the express authorization of the EC, with the exception of Cali, where the leadership was not consulted. None of the invitations the collectives made to the comrade were vetoed by the EC, and in Bogotá it was the EC that took the initiative through one of its members. Only one of the articles submitted by the comrade to the newspaper was not published. It was not published because the secretariat considered it to be in disagreement with the political line of the party. It dealt with the Citizens National General Strike. However, the record of the secretariat said that it could be published after publication of the political resolution approved by the convention. If the secretariat is to be criticized, it should be for superdemocracy. Our party is a Bolshevik one, and the newspaper expresses the party line. The newspaper is not the sum of the columnists, in which all can say what they please. The newspaper is homogeneous and reflects the general orientation of the party. For this reason, because the comrade's article did not follow the party line voted on at the convention, it was not accepted for publication. Let's assume that the secretariat was mistaken, that the article was in agreement with the political resolution. Why was this situation not brought up in the EC? Why was it not shown that this was the case? Not only the secretariat held this opinion. Comrade G.V. noted in a memorandum presented to the EC that there are differences of "nuance." What is this difference of nuance? The characterization of the revolutionary stage following the Citizens National General Strike. The political resolution says that we are continuing through a nonrevolutionary stage in which the mass upsurge is gathering strength as a result of the Citizens Strike. Comrade R.'s article says that we are in a period of transition. "This formidable movement has opened a period of *transition* toward more generalized forms of workers' and people's struggles. The continuation of the teachers' and oil workers' strikes shows the ascending course of the struggles. The Citizens Strike of Barranca is the continuation of a period marked by new strikes, regional and national work stoppages, confrontations, and crises." Are there or are there not differences on central aspects in the party's tactics?

It is true that there were manifestations of sectarianism toward Comrade R. For instance, the EC at one point decided that the signature of Comrade R. would not appear in the newspaper. This error was corrected within a week in agreement with a proposal by Comrade G.V. which was approved unanimously by the EC.

Comrade R. was invited to all the meetings of the EC and of the preconvention commission where the materials

we were presenting to the CC and then to the convention were discussed. The comrade attended only one meeting of the preconvention commission, the one held the day before the disciplinary measures were to take effect. Nothing can be alleged about his absence because he had the materials at the same time as all the EC members and the commission. The only explanation is the individualistic and factional behavior of the comrade. What was the EC's response? To extend the deadline so that he would present his criticisms of the program, bring them to the CC for discussion, and later publish them in the preconvention bulletin. This was the sectarian behavior of the EC!

Moreover, the comrade has participated in meetings where the analysis and policy concerning the Citizens National General Strike and the constituent assembly were debated. The first occasion was at the request of the comrade and the second was at the EC's initiative. That is, the comrade has participated in the main political discussions the EC held during this period; he has not been excluded from any of them. He has excluded himself from some of them!

How can we characterize the EC's behavior? As sectarian and factional? No! The EC's behavior has not been sectarian and factional. The EC has complied with the letter and spirit of the May 1977 resolution. It has made errors, but it has corrected them immediately.

The resolution in which Comrade R. was disciplined proposed: "To take as the basic criterion in discussing the reentry of Comrade R.S. that he demonstrate for a period of no less than six months occupational stability and an attitude of honest collaboration and activism with the Socialist Bloc." Let us evaluate the "collaboration and activism" of Comrade R., because he defined his occupation as university professor.

During the party convention it was raised repeatedly that Comrade R. had not been active in the election campaign, nor the activities preparing for the Citizens National General Strike, nor the preparation for the convention, which were the fundamental tasks of the party. At the convention, concerning the note the comrade sent asking to attend the sessions, he presented as proof of his activity the articles written for the newspaper and one for *Revista de América*. We will not repeat here the discussion we had on this matter at the convention; we will simply say that already two different conceptions were being put forth of party activity. What has the record of activity of the comrade been since the convention, following the criticisms made of his party activity? The comrade has not recruited a single precandidate, has not set up a single support committee, has not gotten a single pledge in the financial campaign, does not pay a sustainer to the party, did not bring anyone to the mobilization of the eighteenth, nor did he attend it himself. Moreover, what political work has the comrade done in his area of mass work, the university professors? What has he done there to build the party, to get out its electoral policy, to carry out its financial campaign, to build the mobilization of the eighteenth and in this connection to put forward the policy outlined in the party's political resolution? The answer is the same: Nothing! The comrade has done nothing to promote the party's line. While the party, its leadership, its members, and sympathizers devoted themselves to building the election and financial campaigns, Comrade R. dedicated himself to discrediting the leader-

ship and some of its members and combating the party's policy. This simple fact, that the comrade despite the criticisms made of him at the convention for inactivity, for not promoting the party's line, for not carrying out the election and financial campaigns, in which the whole membership was exerting itself with excellent results, is sufficient to characterize the comrade and deny him reentry into the party. The comrade's position is a liquidationist one. If we add to this the factional and disloyal behavior he has kept up, we will be filling out a new characterization.

All this is not enough. Comrade R. has devoted himself to travelling around the country (Bogotá, Pasto, Cali, Bucaramanga) to give lectures on the Citizens National General Strike and the constituent assembly without consulting the party leadership, without asking for authorization to do so, and without putting this activity at the service of the party, but on the contrary putting forth a policy contrary to the party's. That is, Comrade R. has put himself outside the party.

Comrade R.'s practical behavior negates the Bolshevik conception of our party. It negates it because it negates the principle of democratic centralism as we understand it and as it was understood by Trotsky, Cannon, Lenin, and the Third International; because it also negates it at a time when the party is experiencing a special political situation: the election campaign, in which all its forces are concentrated, in which it must act as a single person and with great discipline; a campaign to which all other party activities are subordinated. The comrade also negates, through his practical behavior, the party's conception of its political campaigns, by putting himself outside it and combating the policy and leadership of the party, and he also negates teamwork, the concrete expression of the exercise of democracy as an extension of collective decision making on the basis of common experience we have in applying its policy in the mass movement. Finally, the inactivity of the comrade in the central tasks of the party, the election and financial campaigns, is sufficient political reason to deny him membership and this is what we do with any sympathizer and candidate member—evaluate him in accordance with his practical political activity; and with all the better reason in the case of a comrade who has been a party leader and was previously disciplined.

The Attitude of Other Comrades. We have said that some comrades have a similar behavior. A sector of the party that promotes, stimulates, and practices these same attitudes becomes a problem that must be resolved. Let us cite some new facts.

In Internal Bulletin No. 41, November 16, 1977, the memorandum that resulted in the disciplinary action against Comrade G.J. is published, as is the letter the EC sent to the leadership of the Bogotá center zone, in which the standards by which the leadership functions are further specified. This letter presents some fundamental aspects of the internal regime of the party and leadership. Here again the principle of democratic centralism is placed in question by the practical behavior of the comrade, with the aggravating factor that the comrade "justifies her behavior at the plenary" despite stating her agreement with the general criteria put forth by the leadership. We are in complete disagreement with the behavior of the comrade and the conception this behavior reflects of the internal regime of the party. We will quote the words of the

letter from the EC to the center zone to make our position clear. "These standards of functioning of the national leadership of the party are closely related to our positions on the method of leading a party that is a party of action, for active participation in the mass movement. This clarification is part of the advances we have made in building a solid party leadership team at a national level and in building regional teams.

"To say that the EC and the leading bodies of the party function as a team rather than as the sum of tendencies, factions, or brilliant individuals is to say that within this leadership team all the comrades have the right to discuss, dissent, etc., but that once a decision is made by the majority this is the position of the leadership team, and in all the party bodies and at all the points where the members of the leadership must carry out their activity in the party, this is the position they will express and defend. The majority which took X or Y position has the right to see that the whole party works for this orientation, and only later evaluation, practical results in the class struggle and in the development of the party, will be the criteria defining the validity or invalidity of this or that orientation."

To this behavior of the comrade we will add the contents of the reports presented by Comrades E.R. and C.J. These reports clearly show the factional, disloyal and cliquist method used by the comrade. Despite the intense debate we carried on at the party convention against these methods and this view of the internal party regime and daily functioning, despite the debates in the EC, the comrade continues to use the methods noted and continues to use them at a time when the party needs the maximum unity and cohesion to face the tasks it must undertake in the class struggle. In addition, Comrade G.J. either does not understand or else opposes the organizing conception of the party and hence of the internal regime that orients it, and assumes behavior and a political attitude which we cannot conciliate with because it paralyzes the party and its leadership.

There is more. By his negative vote, Comrade G.V. has accepted the behavior of Comrade G.J. though he agreed that both actions were cause for disciplinary action. To quote Comrade G.V., "My negative vote on the disciplinary actions against Comrade G. and Comrade Luis R. was deliberately and consciously a vote of *protest and rejection* of the factional point of view shaping the first—skillfully screened in the second—recognizing that the behavior of both were in themselves cause for disciplinary action." The comrade did not explain why it was factional to discipline Comrade G. Is it factional, perhaps, to discipline clearly factional behavior? Why didn't Comrade G.V. act in agreement with the principles of the party? Why did he refuse to support disciplinary action against factional behavior?

The position of Comrade G. is no accident. A few days earlier, the comrade said the following to the Neiva collective, according to the written account by the same comrade: "The report on the convention. There is unanimous recognition of the advances and achievements on the programmatic, political, and organizational levels expressed by the convention and the inaugural meeting itself. There are great differences on the form and method of carrying on the tendency struggle against the so-called 'secret faction.' Several comrades (Orlando, Stella, Este-

ban, etc.), longtime party activists and working-class leaders, have expressed discontent with or openly rejected as 'manipulative,' 'sectarianism,' and 'irresponsibility,' the way the leadership of the majority tendency carried on the debate and the tendency struggle itself. It was Stella who took the questioning further and even raised problems concerning Pluma Publishing House. I had a long discussion with them along the lines of the current point of view of the EC, but I could not help recognizing the objective basis of their questioning. This was the most I could do as a member of the leadership and the least I could tell them as part of the minority at the convention." The comrade discusses with the comrades of Neiva not only as a member of the leadership but also as a member of the minority at the convention. No, comrade, there are no longer minorities and majorities in the party. The convention dissolved the tendencies and the whole party carries out the policy approved by the convention and every member of the leadership presents the positions voted on by the convention and by the body he belongs to.

On this occasion, Comrade G. criticized Comrade A.R., a member of the CC and responsible to the CC for the Neiva zone, for consulting his leadership body, the EC, on what orientation to follow to resolve problems that had come up in the collective, without doing so beforehand in the zone leadership. We insist again that the party leadership is not a federation of representatives of zones, but a centralized organism that functions as a team. Because he understood it in that way, Comrade A.R. sent the letter to the EC. The comrade is to be congratulated. Because Comrade G. did not understand this, he brought the problem to the ranks of the Neiva zone and had Comrade A.R. make a self-criticism. Comrade G. deserves criticism.

We also have information on a similar situation that exists in the collectives of Medellín and Cali, submitted by rank-and-file comrades to their respective leaderships. These reports are quite clear and the comrades give a precise description of the size of the problem and its political significance. We think these facts are enough.

d. *Some conclusions.* The behavior of the comrades reveals a factional and disloyal attitude toward the party, particularly in Comrades R. and G.; this attitude is repeated and even systematic in the first comrade.

—In its effects and practical expression, it negates some of the basic principles of party functioning, such as teamwork, the role and functioning of the leadership, the way and time to carry on a tendency struggle, internal party discipline, and the way to carry on debates and discussions in the organization.

—The attitude of the comrades violates democratic centralism and in doing so negates one of the main elements of the organizational conception of our party.

—Negating these principles means negating the need for a highly centralized party, solid and cohesive, which acts as a single unit with a single policy in the eyes of the masses; that is, it means negating the existence of a Bolshevik party.

This internal situation has effects that are felt in the work of the party, as some comrades have pointed out in their letters and as the report presented by the EC in Internal Bulletin 41 points out. This conflict in the party is

made more serious by the political tasks we need to immediately carry out, particularly those in the electoral and financial campaigns, which demand the maximum possible unity and cohesion of the party and its leadership and the greatest efficiency and ability to carry out the tasks on the part of all the comrades. If we do not resolve this situation, we run the risk of paralyzing the party or failing to take advantage of excellent opportunities we have to proletarianize the party, double or triple the membership, expand nationally, go into new areas of work, make our finances sound, increase the number of newspapers sold—in other words, to make an enormously important qualitative leap which at the end of the election campaign will make us one of the main left-wing political forces in Colombia, a possibility we are confirming day after day with the striking success of our election campaign and the correct political moves we have made in the last year in the mass movement.

To resolve this conflict, now that we have defined it, means eradicating these methods from the party and fighting these conceptions to the finish. But at the same time, it means—on the basis of the analysis supported by concrete facts—applying the internal regime of the party described in the statutes, that is, drawing the organizational conclusions from the analysis presented.

The Tasks to Be Carried Out

As concerns the policy of the party, we propose a new plan for the election campaign and the financial campaign that will revise the plans followed up to now and correct the errors made. We also propose a new political resolution that takes into consideration the events that occurred after the convention and particularly after the mobilization of the eighteenth.

In the organizational field we propose that the CC adopt the following measures on the basis of the analysis presented in this report:

a. To extend the disciplinary action against Comrade R., separating him indefinitely from the party and eliminating the special status given to him by the resolution adopted in May. The comrade will be able to demonstrate by his practical application of the party's policy and by his honest activity that he has changed his political behavior.

b. To discipline Comrade G.J. by separation from the party until at least the end of the election campaign for the reasons explained above. The comrade will be able to appeal to the party convention and show her change by her attitude and behavior in practice.

c. To accept the resignation of Comrade G.V. as a member of the EC for the reasons given above and not to accept in any way the terms included in his letter to the EC of November 2 of this year.

d. To authorize the regional leaderships to take the organizational measures they consider necessary in their respective collectives in common agreement with the EC.

e. To publish this activities report and distribute it for discussion in the ranks of the party if it is approved by the next CC, following the same procedure adopted for publication of the documents that led to the disciplinary action against Comrade R. in May 1977.

December 12, 1977, Report to Central Committee of the Colombian PST

By Greco

(Because of deficiencies in the tape recording, Comrade Greco filled in the gaps on the basis of his notes. Parentheses have been used to indicate these corrections.)

(We were hoping) that the representatives of the leadership of our international, who were going to participate in the Central Committee meeting of the Colombian PST, would offer us an analysis of the status of the class struggle in the world, explain the political lines applied by our international in the key countries of the class struggle and draw a balance sheet on these political lines. And our first . . . well, it wasn't a surprise, but rather a confirmation of the situation in the Fourth International, is that neither of the two comrades who spoke in the name of the United Secretariat were capable of giving us a report telling us: the class struggle is like this, we applied such and such a political line, and we obtained such and such results. They made an organizational report on the Fourth International. They explained to us that the tendencies dissolved themselves; that there was a better climate for discussion; that in this context a problem existed: the Bolshevik Tendency, which is not dissolving. To all intents and purposes then, the biggest obstacle to normalizing the situation in the international is our Bolshevik Tendency. Together with this, Comrade Jean-Pierre painted the picture of a situation in which, as the Fourth International is growing and improving internally, the Bolshevik Tendency is entering into a process of crisis. He virtually gave us a deluxe burial, because he said that we were already finished, that the Bolshevik Tendency practically had no reason for existing.

Our report on the situation in the international and the situation of our tendency is absolutely the opposite. It is not accidental, because impressionism in the political arena has been the permanent method of the ex-IMT. Comrade Jean-Pierre did not say what occurred in the international since 1969 up to now. He listed some elements of what had occurred in the last month or in the last two months. He did not say that in 1969 our tendency was reduced to a handful of militants in Argentina and a smaller handful of militants in Uruguay. He did not say that in this entire period our tendency has spread out to practically all the central countries of Latin America and has extended to Europe. He did not talk about the numerical growth of our tendency. He did not say—and this is an important thing to be noted by people who claimed to be the world's greatest experts in underground work—that the Argentine PST is the only party in the Fourth International that could survive in a situation such as exists in my country, grow in this situation, and give an example to everyone, not only Trotskyists, but the workers parties and the workers movement on a world scale. None of this was mentioned by Comrade Jean-Pierre. Comrade Jean-Pierre came here to tell us that the Bolshevik Tendency is in a crisis because Comrade Antonio broke from it, because the

Lucas group left it, because the Portuguese PRT entered into a crisis, and there is a problem in the Colombian PST.

This is one aspect of his report. We could discuss some of these cases. In some of them agreement could be reached with Comrade Jean-Pierre because we also have the custom of being objective. Actually, the Portuguese PRT is in a state of crisis; according to our interpretation, not because of the policies of our tendency but because in two critical moments they were incapable of implementing the policy of our tendency: when it was suggested that they enter the Portuguese SP and when the attempt at an electoral campaign failed. We would disagree, on the other hand, with the report on Spain. We think that the work of the comrades of our tendency in Spain is quite good.

An Unprincipled Front

But in any case, the dynamic of the tendencies and currents cannot be analyzed solely as a summation of national realities. And what we must point out in any analysis of the situation of our international is the political lines, the application of these lines. All the comrades must wonder why was the report of the two comrades of the United Secretariat purely organizational? Do you know why it was purely organizational, comrades? Because all the documents of the Fourth International were declared "historical," except one: *Socialist Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat*. That means that the IMT's document for Europe (which was going to arm our sections in Europe) no longer exists. The documents of the Tenth Congress no longer exist. Question: What is the political line of our Fourth International? There isn't any. To be able to dissolve the tendencies it was necessary not only to liquidate the positions that these tendencies held and continue to hold in an unprincipled front, but in addition leave our international as if it were just born, with one hand behind and the other in front, stripped of a political line. I would like the comrades of the United Secretariat to first inform us as to which documents govern the policies of the leadership of the Fourth International. Those of the Tenth?

Jean-Pierre Your information is absolutely false. What documents have been withdrawn? The documents of the Ninth World Congress and parts of the documents of the Tenth on Latin America, and that's all. Just that which is referred to in the Self-Criticism and the logical consequences of the Self-Criticism. But they are not withdrawn. It is the world congress which is going to take this up. When the world congress takes it up, a different text will be presented.

Greco Does the document of the Tenth World Congress stand in relation to Europe?

Jean-Pierre For the time being, up until the next world congress, yes.

Greco The information that we had, comrades, was this.

But then we're going to take advantage of the fact that documents exist and explain in the light of these documents the dissolution of the tendencies. Afterwards, we will verify which information was the most correct.

To dissolve the tendencies in an international and to unify around the leadership bodies, you have to meet a prerequisite so that this dissolution is principled and this later unification is likewise principled. And this prerequisite is that no fundamental differences exist between those who are carrying out this action of dissolution of tendencies and the unification on a new . . . we characterize it as a "bloc."

The Dissolution of the Tendencies

What occurred in our international was the categorical and resounding failure of the LTF which was reduced to its minimum expression, and which opted to dissolve itself when in practice it was already dissolved—as Comrade Jean-Pierre himself said to me on previous occasions. The loss of everything that was the LTF in Latin America. The loss of almost everything that was the LTF in Europe . . . on this annihilation of the LTF, the subsequent dissolution was based. It was a dissolution of what was already dissolved. And this dissolution was the result of the political line used by the LTF in Portugal, of the political line posed by the LTF for Spain, of the political line posed by the LTF in Angola.

The dissolution of the IMT, which also is a manifestation of a crisis, not of a physical disappearance as in the case of the LTF, but of a prolonged crisis which lasted eight or nine years, which went through the guerrilla variant, went through the adventurous actions of the mass vanguard in Europe, which went through the catastrophe of Portugal, and which terminated in the Spanish FUT. The crisis of the two political lines incapable of orienting the sections, incapable of orienting the international, is what produced its dissolution.

The problem is to dissolve . . . for what? Giving us sweet talk the comrades will tell us: to work through the organisms of the international, because in this international no plot exists. We are Marxists: subjective considerations are of no importance to us, what is important is the interpretation of the practical reality as it is given. And the practical reality as it is given is the unity of these two ex-currents of ex-tendencies against the Bolshevik Tendency with the program of democratic centralism understood in a revisionist manner. This is the reality of our international.

What Unites This Bloc?

Let's study this bloc a little, which was thrown together. Who are in this bloc? Comrade Jean-Pierre, when he comes to any country, when he speaks as a leader tells you: Comrade, I'm of the opinion that the SWP, particularly Comrades Hansen and Barnes, in addition to Novack, has a revisionist concept of the question of democracy. But Comrade Jean-Pierre is together with the SWP, Novack, Hansen, and Barnes in this bloc.

(The SWP and the IMT have stood at opposite poles in face of the Angolan and African revolution in general, one of the most important points) of the world revolution. However, the SWP and the ex-IMT are united. The African revolution has not been able to divide this holy alliance.

In Europe we're going to take up some examples. The

SWP is of the opinion that the French LCR committed an error in principle in voting for the Union of the Left, because the Union of the Left is a popular front. The French LCR is of the opinion that neither is the Union of the Left a popular front nor did they commit any error in principle. But the French LCR and the SWP are united in this bloc.

In Spain. Comrade Hansen says: The fundamental reason for the dissolution of the LTF is that it finished with the problem of the guerrilla war. And he forgets that the LTF itself characterized this same method as having extended to Europe around the broad mass vanguard. In Spain only a few months ago, the Spanish LCR carried out the most fabulous vanguardist policy that has ever been seen, when it made this monstrous Frente Unico de los Trabajadores with the whole swamp, with the whole ultraleft, with the whole Spanish centrist formations.

(In this Comrade Jean-Pierre was correct: The European document of the Tenth World Congress has been declared not "historical," but the policy which the Spanish LCR applied was the policy of this document. Actually this document is still followed in practice. But the SWP and Comrade Hansen, who less than four years ago formed a tendency to combat this document and this policy, are now in an unprincipled bloc with the authors of this document and the Spanish LCR, which continues to apply this policy.

(In Portugal the IMT considered that the central task in the prerevolutionary period was the construction of organs of dual power. The SWP and the LTF held that this was not so. But today both are united in an unprincipled bloc.

(Comrade Hansen in his report to the International Executive Committee in February 1975 said that our tendency was going to move toward unification with the IMT. And he characterized this hypothetical unification as a political crime. What happened was a unification, not of our tendency, but of the LTF with the IMT, and the characterization of "political crime" has been forgotten for the sake of an unprincipled bloc.

(But let's see how this unprincipled bloc is also manifested here in Colombia.

(Comrade Ricardo Sánchez pounded Barnes, attacking his report *Europe vs. America and the Crisis of Stalinism*. He found in these statements reasons for constituting the Bolshevik Tendency. Today this material still remains pertinent, and nonetheless Ricardo Sánchez is in an unprincipled bloc together with Barnes, calling for the tendencies to dissolve.

(Comrade Jean-Pierre has told us repeated times that Ricardo Sánchez did absolutely nothing while he was in Europe. But now Comrade Jean-Pierre is together with Ricardo Sánchez in an unprincipled bloc.

(Comrade Jaime Galarza is completely against—and he voted against it in the United Secretariat—the entrance of Fausto Amador into the international. Comrades Hansen and Jean-Pierre are in favor of it. But these three comrades are together in an unprincipled bloc.

(I believe that these elements give us a preliminary insight into what is involved politically in this bloc: an unprincipled agreement between currents and sectors that do not agree politically on key questions of the class struggle. And, in view of the fact that this bloc guides our international, I believe also that we have a clear descrip-

tion of the political crisis in which our world party is submerged.)

The Organizational Political Crisis

As to the organizational question, I do not want to carry on a war of figures. We are accustomed to European impressionism. And I do not say this out of nationalism but because unfortunately the education of the European Trotskyists all comes from the same source, the IMT.

The situation of the main sections in Europe: the French LCR,—Jean-Pierre himself said it—: “crisis of political leadership.” The situation of the IMT and the LCR: at the next to the last congress it constituted an overwhelming crushing majority within the LCR; at the last congress, 45 percent of the LCR stood against the IMT. But Comrade Jean-Pierre says: the crisis is positive. Why positive? Do you know who came out against the IMT? They were the self-management currents—which discovered that in the party you have self-management, not centralism—the ecological currents, the abortionist currents . . . an enormous quantity of this motley crew, which here in Colombia is denominated the “coffee-house crowd,” if I’m not mistaken “swamp” also. That’s 45 percent of the French Revolutionary Communist League. But to finish with the comparison—Comrade Jean-Pierre just told us here that 75 percent were union members. I turn to *Rouge*. In the campaign that *Rouge* is making, it is put this way: “*Rouge* in danger of death,” and that we all hope it will not die because it is a great conquest of the international—a French worker writes telling them: Look, comrades, I have always contributed, I am a member of the CP, I sympathize with you, but I have always contributed and I have supported you, I had hopes in your party, here’s my contribution so that *Rouge* can appear, but this is the last time I’m going to do it. For two reasons: One, because I have seen your party launch a campaign and abandon it in a couple of days; two, I have never seen your leaders or your members in the plants selling your newspaper, etc. But, aside from this, if what the worker says were not enough, what the leadership of the LCR replied should be: Comrade, you are right. We have not succeeded in overcoming a student attitude. This is signed. We continue to hold a student attitude. But it is ten years since May 1968! Ten years are too much to continue holding a student attitude! This is one of the two biggest sections in Europe! The Fourth must explain why ten years after 1968 we continue to hold a student attitude and why we are in a crisis of political leadership in France.

On Spain, we have already been given astronomical figures, comrades. What we know is the following: the 7,000 militants of the Spanish LCR got 30,000 votes in the elections, or 40,000. Forty thousand divided by 7,000 gives an average of five or six votes per head, which signifies that there is a problem here: either these 7,000 members are inactive, or these 7,000 activists do not exist.

Beginning of a Moral Crisis

Unfortunately to these elements of a political crisis, of a political-organizational crisis, elements of a moral crisis have begun to appear in our international, which worries us a great deal. Since you do not know about them, I am unfortunately going to have to go into this at some length.

Beginning with Comrade Mandel and the famous matter of the *Viejo Topo* magazine and his openly pro-CP Euro-communist declarations. Were they made by him, or were they not made by him? We have the proof that they were made by him. Comrade Mandel later rectified his line, but there is a categorical moral fact: Comrade Mandel denied that these declarations were his, and, at the request of the Yankee comrades, the United Secretariat made an ardent defense of Comrade Mandel in a motion saying: Why does the factional Bolshevik Tendency believe that Comrade Mandel could have made these declarations? But Comrade Mandel made them, we have the tape recording. He said everything that appeared in the *Viejo Topo*. The problem here is not that he rectified his line, very good that he rectified it. But Comrade Mandel lied, and the United Secretariat lied to the whole international. First moral item.

Second moral item: the famous and scandalous case of Comrade Josefina and her friends in Mexico, comrades, which has been proved, documented. We have the tape recordings. Declarations made by them, saying: Comrades I had a meeting with the Mexican police behind the back of the organs of my party, I never informed the organs of my party; and, in addition, since the police told me that Comrade Ricardo Hernández was a policeman, I carried out a campaign so that Comrade Hernández would not be elected to the Executive Committee of my party. They said it; we did not say a word. These comrades are, were, the top leaders of the LTF in Latin America and were unconditionally defended by the SWP and by the leadership of the Fourth International. That means: first, you can lie in the Fourth International. Second precedent, in the Fourth International any leader can privately contact the police without informing his party, on the basis of these contacts mount a campaign against another comrade, and this leader does not merit any disciplinary action. Now, these comrades are in the leadership of the Mexican PRT, against the vote of our comrades.

Third, worrisome case from the moral angle. Worrisome but a little laughable. The other great leader of the LTF in Latin America is Comrade Otto MacKenzie (Oh, I forgot: Comrade Cristina writes for *Intercontinental Press*; Comrade Otto MacKenzie also writes now for *Intercontinental Press*). Comrade Otto MacKenzie in his work in this country was to be an inspector for the Labor Department and make rulings against workers. Third precedent: The international accepts as leaders comrades who exercise public functions of the bourgeois state against the working class.

Fourth element, which came up in today’s meeting and which was categorical, concrete, on the part of Comrade Hansen. Did you listen closely to what he said on why we should not discipline Socorro? Socorro should not be disciplined because she is our presidential candidate. And he told us that he had never seen anything like this in the history of the Fourth. I don’t know, in the history of the Fourth if a presidential candidate was ever disciplined. But I know something about the history of the Third. And I know categorically that it is a moral question, a question of principle, that the comrades who carry out functions of a parliamentary type or are high in the leadership of the trade unions, the party keeps a thousand, two thousand, three thousand times closer watch on them than on the leading comrades of the party as a whole. The entire

struggle against parliamentary cretinism occurred around this principled, moral issue: When a candidate, a type who holds a post in an association, or a high trade-union leader, breaks a millimeter, a millimeter! with the party regime, that person has to be disciplined ten, twenty, thirty times more forcefully than any other comrade in the party. When Lenin struggled against parliamentary cretinism and other variants, he was emphatic about this. And Comrade Hansen tell us that we do not understand what democratic centralism is; and he has established—it is taped—a new norm for the international: the candidates—and naturally if they are elected and seated in the congress—can do anything they wish against the party, because they must not be touched. This is the point that has been reached today in the moral decay of the leadership of our international.

And a point remains in which we do not know why none of the comrades of the United Secretariat have taken a stand. Comrades of the United Secretariat: What about the publishing house? There is a Trotskyist publishing house that has been attacked by a bourgeois. The first thing, before saying anything, you had to stop here and say: unconditional defense of the Trotskyist publishing house. But the comrades do not care a fig about this. And by chance this bourgeois is allied with a sector, or is a friend of a sector, which is able to attack the Bolshevik Tendency: that this bourgeois liquidates a Trotskyist publishing house appears to be of no importance to the comrades of the United Secretariat. I hope I am mistaken. This is an appeal to the comrades of the United Secretariat to define their position on the publishing house.

The Unprincipled Bloc and the Bolshevik Party Regime

And thus with this panorama of the Fourth International we can finally understand why the central discussion is about the organizational regime. It is a characteristic of all unprincipled fronts that have existed in the workers movement. It was a characteristic of the Bakuninists against Marx, who said that the Marxist regime was dictatorial; that of the antidefensists against Cannon; that of the group of Sneevliet, Nin and Co. against Trotsky, that of the August Bloc of the year 1912 against Lenin. The characteristic of all these fronts in the absence of principles, of politics, is this: Let's attack the internal regime, let's attack its centralist, disciplined, Bolshevik characteristics. And that is what is being expressed here, with complete clarity, with pristine clarity.

Why does it have to be a struggle against the internal Bolshevik regime? Because without such an attack they cannot exist. People who hold diametrically opposite views on the key problems of the working class cannot exist under a Bolshevik internal regime. They cannot exist. Jaime Galarza, who is against Fausto Amador entering, cannot exist with Jean-Pierre, who is in favor of Fausto Amador entering. We need loose parties, in which all the tendencies express themselves in a free way, because it is the only way we can glue together this tremendous agglomeration of shadings, currents, "nonexisting" factions, in which everyone thinks, does, says, and acts as he wishes. This is what is important because—watch out!—in the name of this, which is already being elevated to a permanent category which is: in all the national parties

you can have any kind of tendencies and you can do anything—which is what the comrades of the United Secretariat came here to tell us—after which they demand that the Bolshevik Tendency observe centralism within the Fourth International. We are going to be centralists in the Fourth, but the comrades are already recommending: no measures against anyone even though they carry on public propaganda against the party.

The worst is that they appeal to tradition. Comrade Hansen told us: you learned nothing. But yes, comrade, we learned a great deal from the SWP. We have always considered it to be our teacher. Do you know why? Because it ruthlessly expelled every factionalist. And not just one, three, or four. More than a hundred comrades of the IMT were thrown out of the SWP. Of course, the SWP said: We did not expel them, they were outside; they said: since they carried out public work and distributed publications different from those of the party, these comrades were outside the party, making another party, therefore they are no longer within our party. Fine. If Comrade Hansen came here to teach us what we did learn from them, he ought to say: Don't expel them, consider them outside the party, that they are a different party. But he did not come here to say that. He came to say: Let them stay inside. I do not recall the SWP vacillating a minute in expelling more than 100 comrades of the IMT. A position that we support unconditionally. This is the method that Comrade Hansen taught us, it is the method that the SWP taught us, and it is the method that we are rescuing from the decadency of the leadership of our international.

The Fausto Amador Case And Its Possible Political Consequences

I wish to deal for a moment—so that you can see the tragic consequence that can arise for the international with the case I mentioned in passing: the case of Mr. Fausto Amador Arrieta. Mr. Fausto Amador Arrieta is an individual who was a member of the Frente Sandinista de Liberación, of which the main leader was his brother. This individual, at a certain moment under the dictatorship of Somoza, appeared before the dailies, in front of the television in Nicaragua, and said, among other things, that he had been visiting Cuba and was totally disillusioned with what was going on in Cuba, that he thought that if the combatants of the Frente Sandinista de Liberación did what he had done—that is, lay down their arms—their lives could be guaranteed, and he actually recommended that they lay down their arms against Somoza. This means that he is not a terribly desirable person. The Frente Sandinista accused him of being a traitor, some say they wanted to execute him—we do not know this for sure—his own brother completely broke off relations with him. This individual is now a member of the Costa Rican OST. Not long ago Comrade Jean-Pierre asked me: I was in Costa Rica; I am alarmed; comrades of the Bolshevik Tendency in Costa Rica do not support the electoral campaign of the OST which is exactly like the one being carried on by the Colombian PST. And my reply to Comrade Jean-Pierre was as follows: There is no reason to worry about the comrades of the Costa Rican PRT refusing to support the party of Fausto Amador Arrieta. In the eyes of Central American public opinion, Fausto Amador Arrieta is the greatest traitor that exists. And this traitor

is now within the Fourth International.

Why do I say this? Not to insist on the moral problem but to see the incalculable political consequences. I would like to see how the leadership of the Fourth International is going to answer, what they choose to do in face of the following . . . Do you know the name they give in Europe to what Fausto Amador did? Collaborationism. That is what the collaborators with the Nazis did. It was called collaborationism. We have to ask: Why did the Fourth International, why did this unprincipled bloc which is directing the Fourth International, instead of listening to the fighters of the Frente Sandinista—who are far leftists, guerrilla fighters, not Marxists, petty-bourgeois populists, petty-bourgeois nationalists . . . but who struggle against Somoza, which is good, who want to struggle against Somoza—why instead of listening to them, do they listen to Fausto Amador, a collaborationist with Somoza? This is what the Fourth International is going to have to explain in Central America. If a very probable combination of circumstances occurs: that Somoza fails; that the Frente Sandinista emerges as a movement of great prestige because of its antidictatorial struggle—although it might be only a democratic struggle—against one of the worst dictatorships in Latin America, a prestige similar or superior to that of the Uruguayan Tupamaros; that the Frente Sandinista might say: I would like the Fourth International to explain why Fausto Amador Arrieta is in its ranks . . . and, gentlemen, at that moment Trotskyism will be finished in Central America. It will be finished because no other explanation is possible except to tell them: Look, inasmuch as Jack Barnes said in his report that if as a member of the LTF, Fausto Amador was not accepted his case could blow the policy of dissolving the tendencies sky high—textually: Can blow this whole policy sky high—then the IMT which was against it, said: Good, we accept it. And that is why he is inside the international.

OK. This is the bloc we have to confront. There is no plot here: the unity is organic, the unity is normal; it is a law of dialectical materialism that unites them. I do not know if they think that way or not; that is totally secondary for us as Marxists. Whether they meant to plan it or not is totally secondary. This talk about “plots” is beneath us as Marxists. The problem is: what objective phenomenon is occurring in the Fourth? It is the objective phenomenon of an agglomeration of sectors in political decomposition, in organizational decomposition, and the sad beginning of moral decomposition.

The Repercussions in Colombia

How is this expressed within the Colombian party? I also listened with attention to jot down anything in the report of the famous tendency that has appeared, and I was left with my pencil raised. Because I expected that as Trotskyists they were going to say: Let's form a tendency because the electoral line is catastrophic, because we are going to carry out a policy of class-collaborationism or an ultraleft policy, because we differ completely with the policy of this party. But no, the tendency thinks the policy of this party is perfect. They have not made a criticism of the policy of this party. It could be something else: let's form a tendency because the electoral line is superstructural, or because the line of the support committees is mad and can lead the party to catastrophe. But no, they are in

agreement also with the line on the support committees. They were also in agreement with having succeeded in bringing together other socialist currents into a front. They are in agreement with the entire political line. Differences are going to appear—don't worry—after a time. But they did not say anything about this. They said: Let's constitute a tendency because we are against the regime.

Then there was profound unity. It was a good thing to have had the two reports one after the other. That meant total unity on an international scale, without a plot, perhaps without a single meeting, perhaps without even talking about it. That is the unity, that is the bloc. This is what, as Marxists, we have to try to understand, because it is a profound problem and because it leads actually to the characterization that our tendency must make of the international situation and what policy we are going to follow in face of it.

In the first place, the first concrete, categorical reply: The situation in the international demands and requires a tighter closing of ranks by our tendency. We are struggling against an extremely dangerous phenomenon, much like that in which the liquidators attacked Lenin in 1908-1912, a front which included everybody, even Trotsky. Altogether here with a single objective: We are against an illegal party. This was the great discussion. All the liquidators were saying: We are against this Lenin who is a beast, just how are we going to make an illegal party. And Lenin said: I will confront along with my Bolsheviks this whole group; it is a liquidationist bloc; I will struggle for an illegal party. And the struggle today is the same one. Either you fight for a Bolshevik party or you are out to get a POUMist party, which means trying to get a party amounting to a summation of factions, a summation of tendencies. It is the same struggle.

The Absence of a Proletarian and Bolshevik Tradition

There is a characteristic that Trotsky always assigned to the petty bourgeoisie, that they do not want to make class characterizations. The Argentine PST and later the Bolshevik Tendency have been attacked in many ways. The preferred charge now is factionalism. But, if we are Marxists, every political phenomenon has its social explanation. If we are factionalists, if we do not understand the situation in the Fourth and thousands of disasters throughout the world are ascribable to us, then you have to explain which class, which class sector is putting pressure on us, is penetrating our ranks, leading us into bringing about so many disasters for Trotskyism, and we have never succeeded in getting a categorical reply from the international. To the contrary, complete unity: here no class characterizations are made. This is what Trotsky said: Not to make class characterizations is petty bourgeois, because in a factional struggle the first thing you have to do is define from the Marxist point of view which classes are expressed in this factional struggle. We who claim to be orthodox Trotskyists do have a class interpretation of this phenomenon. And the phenomenon is the student-type leaderships of our movement.

Comrade Jean-Pierre said that it was a great disaster for our Tendency to have to recognize that now we are not in position to present ourselves as an alternative leadership for the Fourth International. And we think to the contrary

that everything is advancing. Because we are discovering the roots of one of the problems of our Tendency, the generalized problem of the international and also these small split-offs that have occurred and those that are going to occur—because splits in the tendency are going to continue to occur—as can be seen at bottom in the Colombian phenomenon. Do you know why we cannot, despite the rise, build two or three parties of 1,500 or 2,000 members in Europe? Because we do not have cadres with a tradition. And do you know why there are no cadres with a tradition in Europe? Because the IMT educated them. All our cadres, our own European cadres, have been educated in what was —do you remember?—the old Socialist Bloc. The bloc of the coffee-houses, Ricardo's bloc, this socialist bloc. OK, unfortunately this was the only school which our European cadres had. Thus it is going to take two, three, perhaps more years for the comrades to understand what the Colombian PST is coming to understand more and more, and which the great majority of the party understands with complete clarity: politics is not what is carried on in the coffee-houses; the leaders are not those who debate the best nor those who write the best theoretical articles; the leaders are those who take part in the class struggle and those who construct a party in the class struggle. It is going to take time for the European comrades to understand this, and actually there are no Argentinians, nor hordes of Argentinians, nor thousands of Argentinians, who could replace a national leadership. Nor are there going to be thousands of Colombians, which the PST is beginning to be in a position to provide.

That means that we will have to wait for a process of maturation. In this process of maturation we are going to see not only little splits like those we have had; perhaps we'll have bigger splits; there are comrades who fall by the wayside. There are comrades who, precisely because of their class character, put their personal prestige above the necessities of the party. There are comrades who cannot accept a criticism. There are comrades who have to be the main figure—or the star—otherwise they will break with the party. And then we are going to lose these comrades. It is a process that is occurring here and which has occurred in other sectors of the world. But within the dynamic of consolidation of development of our tendency.

Thus comrades, to wind up. The attack that is going to be made will be harsh; Comrade Hansen has already announced it. We are going to be pictured before the whole international as factionalists, as splitters, as those who do not respect the centralism of the international, as if we should—we're not going to do it—let all kinds of tendencies form in the national parties. This is the attack that is coming. It is an attack that is going to last for a long time. Unfortunately, at this time there is no country in the world that has reached a critical stage in the class struggle. We are going to see what happens to this bloc. We do not know if this bloc is going to break into a thousand pieces in face of the impact of the class struggle should a new Portugal arise or if (as is very probable in our opinion) the rise shifts to Latin America. Perhaps no, if the bloc consolidates in face of the impact of the class struggle it is terribly dangerous. This would mean that the fate of the international would be sealed if the bloc is still in the leadership. And we do not know what is going to occur with this bloc, but it has this great advantage: Now we cannot say: Let's discuss Angola, let's discuss this or that

country; now there is no critical prerevolutionary situation in the world.

The Situation of the Class Struggle

We think that in Europe very sharp prerevolutionary situations are unlikely to appear in any country in the immediate period ahead. From the political angle, there are very big control mechanisms which in a practical way are neutralizing the European rise. The rise will continue, it is strong. In Portugal something like a partial retreat has begun: hence the fall of Soares. But in general it appears to us that the control organizations are so monstrous and so well mounted and have had so many years of experience that although the rise will continue, it is going to take time to bring down these mechanisms and put Europe or some country in Europe in a situation of prerevolutionary crisis. We believe that the case of Portugal was to a certain degree exceptional because it was combined with the colonial revolution in Africa.

Let's see, at the same time—and it would be good had the comrades of the United Secretariat taken the floor on this in order to give us their opinion, but they have not said anything—the rise tends to again shift to Latin America. There are important signs of its rise in Latin America; a very deep crisis, latent but close to exploding in Central America; in Brazil; in Peru.

And we see the Argentine question, which gives us the impression that the Argentine proletariat can be converted into the vanguard of the world proletariat. That is to say, it has not been defeated by the dictatorship, it has mounted resistance strikes which recently almost culminated in a general strike, provoking the first important retreat of the Videla dictatorship. Thus we see a tendency for the rise to shift toward our continent.

The Tasks of the Bolshevik Tendency

In Argentina there is a saying that goes: "The racetrack tells which are the horses." That is, you see the horses in the racetrack, those that are the fastest and those that are the slowest. We say the same. We will see whether our tendency is mistaken. It will be demonstrated whether with the rise we break up, we dissolve ourselves. Up to now the contrary has occurred: In those countries of the world where there has been a rise, it has been our tendency that has advanced and it has been the others that have retreated. This is categorical. We think that the same process will continue.

Likewise in the coming months each and every one of you is going to be systematically bombarded by a campaign on our internal regime. There is going to be a tremendous propaganda offensive. Measures are not going to be taken; I, too, am of the same opinion: organizational measures are not going to be undertaken. And this, comrades, poses a great task for our party leadership: We have to train all the cadres of the party as cadres of the Tendency.

You know that there is a danger, what Jean-Pierre said: That we destroy cadres: OK, for me the greatest massacre in the destruction of cadres that I can recall was the massacre committed by the IMT and comrade Jean-Pierre in voting in favor of guerrilla warfare in Latin America. Thus, comrades, our errors can actually destroy cadres, we

can be unjust, we can be mistaken, we are inexperienced, provincial, with a narrow local outlook, not integrated in depth in the leadership of the Fourth International. What Jean-Pierre said is correct—he did not say that this isolation arose from 25 years of isolation imposed upon us by the IMT systematically excluding us from the Fourth; but this is past history, still it is history. And we run the risk of committing errors.

How could we not commit them? First: in this struggle, comrades, by proletarianizing our party. That is to say making our party enter the workers movement, getting the comrades to test themselves in the workers movement, and going so far as to apply (Comrade Hansen said that in the history of the Fourth he had never seen such atrocities) . . . so far as to apply the recommendations of Trotsky when he said to a sector—let us say—youthful, petty bourgeois, within the SWP; these comrades have to carry out hard physical labor in the provinces, and have to win five workers in three months; if they cannot win five workers in three months, they have to drop to the level of sympathizers and be given three months more. If they do not gain five workers in three months, they should be expelled. But this was written by Trotsky, of whom comrade Hansen was a disciple. And he comes to tell us that he has never seen atrocities like ours in the international, caramba! The problem is that the SWP in its time did not go all the way in applying such measures, but another problem is that these were Trotsky's indications in struggling against the penetration into our party of these rotten, semilumpen, coffee-house student types, who permanently try to join up.

Thus, the first measure: in order to carry on this battle—which is not only national, but very international—proletarianizing our party. Second measure: not to accept a single attack against the internal regime of the party. Not a single one! The harder the attack against the internal regime, the more we have to educate the international to which the Bolshevik Tendency directs itself that there are no privileges for candidates, there are no privileges for incorrigible factionalists, there are no privileges for those who defend the right to form a public faction. We must provide the international with a demonstration. The majority, at least the European majority is not going to understand this for a while. Because of this I say that it is not going to be easy. I do believe that in Latin America we are going to understand this much better.

Thus this is the summary of the situation. It is not that our tendency does not have an analysis; it has one: it is the one we have posed. It is not that we do not have a policy. The policy is: form more and more cadres around the political positions and organizational methods of our Tendency; prepare these cadres against an unprincipled bloc of petty-bourgeois characteristics which is now in command in our international; and, beginning from that, with this force, wait. Wait for what? The class struggle. The more we strengthen the Tendency the more this development will be reproduced in the Fourth which Jean-Pierre had to recognize. With a rise in the class struggle our Tendency went from a small handful in Argentina to an entire world current. A new blow of the class struggle and we will see what happens in our international!

APPENDIX I

On the Sanction of Comrade Ricardo Sánchez

By Gladys Jimeno

I have already said that I consider it my moral obligation to present a self-criticism to the whole party for having signed the charges against Comrade R.S. I have also said that only afterward, in reflecting on all the facts and questioning myself on the procedures followed, could I be sure that there was manipulation and distortion of information, of the real facts, and of the implications of what we were doing.

It was Comrade Nahuel Moreno, not present at this CC, who initiated the calling into question of the comrade—while he was still in Europe, blackening the comrade's reputation day after day, including through personal gossip—until this calling into question led him to the proposition that we had to save the party by separating Comrade R.S. from it, saying that if he was tied to it, he would oppose the organizational process underway, because of his hatred for Camilo and other comrades. In addition, that the comrade was a factionalist by nature and would always be carrying on a faction struggle; and this would lead to the liquidation of the party.

I say that there was manipulation by Comrade Moreno, whom we recognized as a leader, and in whom we had full confidence; he abused this confidence by lying to us and

launching an avalanche of slanders against Comrade R. Comrade Moreno knew that we trusted him and used this fact in speaking against Comrade R.S., posing the question to us as one of saving the party. Now, knowing that the real motive was to prevent any questioning of Comrade Moreno and the policies he was implementing, I think that Comrade Moreno should acknowledge himself morally unfit to look the party in the face. For my part, I make a self-criticism and withdraw the support I once gave to these positions when I trusted Comrade Moreno politically and thought I was "saving" the party. Thus the disciplinary measure against Comrade R.S. is clearly a case of political persecution and slanderous defamation of a leader, an attempt to liquidate him as a political cadre.

For this reason, I not only criticize myself but also repudiate and reject these foul methods inside our party and the Fourth International, methods directly attributed to Comrade Moreno, the main person I accuse of responsibility for this political atrocity.

I ask that this letter be published *en toto* for the ranks of the party.

s/Gladys Jimeno

APPENDIX J

Information for the Exclusive Use of Central Committee Members, December 9-10, 1977, Central Committee Meeting

Comrades of the North Zone Leadership
and the Executive Committee:

In relation to certain events that occurred during the November 26 meeting of the workers cell, we wish to express our opinion:

At this meeting Comrade Gustavo Vivas formulated positions that were methodologically incorrect to propose at the cell meeting. Thus:

1. He said that he had asked to withdraw from the EC, and that the EC still had not discussed his request.

We consider that the comrade committed a grave error in bringing this discussion into the cell, when the EC, let alone the CC, had not said anything about his request. We reject the idea that Comrade Gustavo is ignorant as to the procedure his request should follow, especially considering that a discussion had just been completed that explained democratic centralism and the procedures members of the executive committee should use in rank-and-file bodies.

That is, the comrade deliberately violated democratic centralism with clear divisive purposes.

The comrade plainly wants to follow in the footsteps of the great teacher of the world proletariat who, when he found himself in opposition to the party line, asked to be relieved of EC membership so as to polemicize with the majority of the rank-and-file bodies. However, contrary to Comrade Vivas, Lenin never brought this debate to the ranks of the party, but to its leadership. Lenin certainly had a clear understanding of the criteria of democratic centralism.

2. The comrade took issue with the balance sheet presented by the party on its participation in the November 18 mobilization saying that we should attribute the errors made in this mobilization not to political-technical factors, but to deeper political problems. On this the party has self-critically recognized that errors were made in our participation, but within the framework of a correct intervention and a correct characterization of the mobilization. Comrade Vivas has every right to polemicize against this characterization made by the executive committee, but

inside it and not in the rank-and-file bodies, to which he should bring the leadership's position and not his own.

Comrade Vivas irresponsibly violated democratic centralism, once again demonstrating that he was more interested in supporting his personal point of view than that of the party.

3. Finally, the comrade said that the tendency struggle that took place at the convention had not been resolved and that it continued to develop inside the party. This would justify the position taken by the comrade in the process of the discussion in the cell.

This speaks for itself on the seriousness of the positions of Comrade Gustavo. That is, now it is not a matter of misunderstanding democratic centralism, but of openly and deeply advancing a tendentially factional position.

We think that if this type of situation continues to occur in the cell it could lead to obstacles to the application of the line approved by the party, and to demoralization among the new comrades working in this rank-and-file body. These comrades see Comrade Vivas holding a position that is not the party's position and, even worse, see him attacking the party with this position. Thus they see in the irresponsible, anti-party, factional, liquidationist attitude of Comrade Vivas, a party within the party.

We think that at a time when we are solidly launching a socialist current in Colombia and building a strong revolutionary party with influence in the masses, when we are breaking up or linking up with other socialist organizations, the attitude of the comrade is an obstacle that we must put aside in order to realize our above-mentioned objectives.

We hope that the Executive Committee of the Zone leadership will take the necessary corrective measures.

Fraternally,
D. Zabala, Carlos Mendoza,
Danilo Arenas, Ernesto Rodriguez
State team coordinators, North Zone

APPENDIX K

PST Central Committee Resolution on the Proletarian Democracy Tendency and Sanctions

1. The party's growth and unity is being threatened as a result of the faction fight promoted by a group that intends to destroy the method of party building and the internal regime adopted unanimously by our founding convention.

2. The immediate and future prospects for our party depend fundamentally on our ability to adopt a correct policy for the class struggle and apply it in a consistent way, on our moving forward in building a capable leadership team, and—and this is intimately linked to the other—on our membership orienting itself toward the masses and our internal life developing in a disciplined way in the framework of democratic centralist criteria.

3. The stepped up faction fight against the decisions adopted by the convention and against the leadership of the party has been pushed through by violating the adopted resolutions concerning dissolution of tendencies, which prohibit the formation of new tendencies or factions until the next pre-convention period.

4. The factional practice of the comrades has harmed activities in the development of the election campaign, the promotion of mass mobilizations, and the financial campaign, which has resulted in a decrease in the party's capacity for militancy.

5. Since the convention this group of comrades has been engaged in various factional activities. It has held its own factional meetings with rank-and-file members, once with one comrade suspended from the party (Ricardo Sánchez); without the agreement of any leadership body, it has organized the distribution among the membership of internal material of the Executive Committee, the Central Committee, and the United Secretariat in order to further its factional goals. In this they went so far as to allow the circulation of this material outside the party, as occurred with the distribution of Antonio's letter and other documents (balance sheet of the convention, report on the activity of Ricardo Sánchez in Europe, letter from Gustavo Vivas to the Executive Committee, letter from Jaime Galarza to the Executive Committee and the Central Committee) at the door of the Jorge Eliécar theater during the national electoral conference. This chain of facts includes on the part of some Executive Committee members fostering their tendency in rank-and-file structures, bypassing the disciplinary rules of the bodies of which they are members, and culminates in the formation of the so-called

Proletarian Democracy Tendency, which later presented itself to the Central Committee on the basis of a document announcing its formation and signed by comrades Socorro Ramírez (member of the Executive Committee), Gladys Jimeno (suspended from the party by an Executive Committee decision not yet ratified by the Central Committee), Gustavo Vivas (whose resignation from the Executive Committee was accepted a few days ago), Jaime Galarza (member of the Central Committee), Ciro Roldan (member of the Bogotá city leadership), and Ricardo Sánchez (suspended from the party).

6. In view of the situation in the party, which is threatened by a crisis that includes a possible split, we reaffirm our position that the unity of the PST requires the strictest and increasing development of the internal regime and the growing proletarianization of the party.

The best chances for these comrades overcoming their factional attitude and for ensuring that they return to party-building activity as it has been defined by our founding convention are linked primarily to their social status. Only a closer link with the workers movement in the organization of their lives and in their political activity will create the conditions for overcoming their factional attitude and for enabling them to again find a place in party-building activity on the bases defined by our convention.

Resolved:

1. Immediate sanctions against comrades G.V., G.J., and C.R., who are suspended from the party at least until after the election campaign. The comrades will maintain relations with the party through the Executive Committee. Those comrades who have been full-timers will receive two months wages. Before the lifting of the adopted sanctions can be discussed, it is an indispensable condition that the comrades fulfill the following requirements:

- get a fulltime job in a factory or enterprise;
- develop political activity at their place of work according to the party line;
- form at least one committee of supporters of the party and accomplish every task required of any rank-and-file militant, including payment of regular dues according to the dues scale; accomplish the requirements linked to the

financial campaign as have been established for every party member;

d) win a minimum of five workers during the next six months.

2. According to the charges that have been presented, Comrade Socorro Ramírez would merit the same sanction as the other comrades cited above. Taking into account the fact that the comrade did not attend the Central Committee session to present her case and defend herself, the Executive Committee will have to listen to her and take its

own decision to be ratified by the next Central Committee meeting.

In accordance with the decisions taken by this meeting of the Central Committee, Comrade Socorro Ramírez will have as her militant task and fundamental responsibility the presidential candidacy.

(After the CC, comrade S.R. did not come to the Executive Committee to present her case, at the same time as she said during a plenary session of the Bogotá city membership that she would not respect party discipline. For this reason, the Executive Committee decided to separate Comrade S.R. from the party.)

APPENDIX L

Declaration of the Proletarian Democracy Tendency and Counterreport on the Party Regime

Bogotá
December 9, 1977

Very important developments have just occurred in our international, in the Bolshevik Tendency, and in various national parties, especially in the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores in Colombia (former Socialist Bloc). In assessing the attitude of all the members and leaders of the international, these events are crucial. In the case of the PST they are influencing its development in a decisive way.

The first outstanding item is the decision of the Leninist Trotskyist Faction and the International Majority Tendency to dissolve and accept a common framework of discussion in preparation for the eleventh congress of the Fourth International. This decision is a consequence, in our opinion, of a number of factors, the most important being a rise in the world revolution, mainly in Europe, and the resulting growth on an international scale of our world organization by hundreds and thousands of new members. This rise and growth poses an objective need to struggle unitedly to provide the Fourth with policies and a leadership conducive to centralizing the action of our movement on all levels. No one is under any illusion concerning the fact that the present leadership of the international, as well as that of the minorities, such as the dissolved LTF, are too limited politically to lead the Fourth. Likewise no one is under any illusion about the dissolution of factions necessarily implying unity of the forces in an automatic way, still less the disappearance of ideological-political differences, including in decisive matters. And we are aware that entering into the decision of the factions to dissolve was an attempt to seek political and organizational readjustments in face of defeats in the execution of certain policies.

But what is decisive, what we must assess as Marxists and Trotskyists, is the vitally important aspect of creating the best possible conditions—through collective discussion, democracy, and common action—to promote the greatest unity and centralization. All this must be done without impairing the necessary discussion, criticism, and formation of ideological groups or tendencies within the framework of the Fourth International. More favorable conditions are being created for developing a policy and an

international leadership better fitted to deal with the necessities and possibilities demanded by the present course of the world revolution.

The second outstanding item is the contrast between this positive fact and the deep crisis that has struck the up-until-recently dynamic Bolshevik Tendency. The tendency was formed with the correct claim of offering political alternatives and a leadership in face of the picture of crisis presented by our world movement, especially with regard to orientation for building Trotskyist parties with mass influence in those countries experiencing revolutionary upsurges. The Bolshevik Tendency formulated criticisms of the initial drafts of the document on Europe approved by the United Secretariat that were, in our opinion, correct as a whole. It proceeded in an equally correct way in its criticism of the ambiguous formulations of the LTF on the course of the Portuguese revolution and its political attitude in face of the Black revolution in Angola. As a whole these differences, so burning in themselves, justified the proposal to form a new tendency within the existing framework of the international.

Nonetheless, the Bolshevik Tendency exaggerated the class character of the differences not only polemically but in practical conclusions. It forgot to emphatically underline that the differences fell within the framework of Trotskyism and the Fourth International and it evaded a frank discussion in the leading bodies of the international, failing to present positive alternatives or to open the discussion in a collective way. It acted in a way that was not only factional but extremely sectarian, constantly alluding to the incurable or almost incurable character of the majority of the leaders of the international, including the present leadership of the SWP which it considered to be "living on its prestige" and compromised by involvement in morally condemnable affairs. It made *Revista de América* not only the organ of a public faction but a sectarian instrument of political combat. The necessity for a principled and vigorous discussion was unfortunately equated with McCarthyism, the IMT was branded as Poumist, positions were misrepresented as in the case of the French LCR and the Spanish LCR (see the articles in *Revista*).

Comrade Moreno announced that a decision had been

made to reply after the IEC meeting to the proposal to dissolve tendencies; the BT was transformed into a faction, which was equivalent to deepening still further the sectarian course that had been taken. In line with this an image has been projected in the most demagogic way of the BT preparing to take over the leadership of the international; this was done at the last meeting of the tendency attended by delegates from the parties in Argentina, Peru, Panama, Venezuela, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico, Ecuador (October 1977). In addition the thesis was offered that these tendencies had dissolved with the objective of forming an unprincipled united front against the BT and that the dissolution was a consequence of the pressure of bourgeois public opinion, mainly in Europe. We consider such a step to be most unfortunate and we hope that it will not be carried through in view of the new political situation that has developed in which the leaders of the BT can contribute to the discussions for the eleventh congress.

Proceeding further, the BT laid out tactical orientations, including some in the most detailed nature—reflecting a paternalistic approach to national leaderships of certain parties (Spain, Venezuela, Colombia) that resulted in the withdrawal of one of the groups of the BT in Spain, the one led by Lucas, and the withdrawal of Antonio and Yarak from both the BT and the international. The case of Antonio merits special attention since he was the main leader of the Venezuelan party and the main person in charge of work for the BT in Spain. Antonio was presented by Comrade Moreno as a model Bolshevik leader and the prototype of a genuine revolutionist. As shown by the documentation we have seen, Antonio was subjected to a process designed to destroy his good name and accused of setting up a faction against his own party. We lament Antonio's decision to leave the Fourth and we will try to get him to return to its ranks; but this does not prevent us from pointing out—on the contrary it makes it obligatory—that the causes of the situation in which Antonio found himself were rooted in the deep deformations in method employed by Comrade Moreno in relation to the construction of a party and the treatment of national leaderships. Antonio states in his letter of resignation: "Through this letter I want to make known that I have broken with the BT. The fundamental reason for this decision is the liquidationist work carried out by Nahuel Moreno in the Venezuelan section of the Fourth International."

The leadership of the BT has not been guided by an effective collective leadership but has been exercised by Comrade Moreno in a personal way and with a paternalistic character. Changes in decisions, orientation of line, disposition of resources—all of this is done outside of the leadership bodies, or with merely formal consultation. This dynamic leads to a practice of splitting national sections and an ultrafactionalist and sectarian conception of constructing the world party.

The third important event concerns the Colombian Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores which has undergone a significant growth. In addition a process of fusion has been opened on the basis of a political agreement that makes the fusion possible within the framework of a united electoral campaign. Despite this, the intervention of Comrade Moreno and a sector of the leadership of the Argentine PST in the Colombian PST by means of bureau-

cratic and administrative methods has created a situation that has come close to splitting the party and in fact threatens to liquidate the party. A systematic campaign has been opened designed to destroy leaders of the party through mechanically transposing the class struggle into the party and by administrative means artificially suppressing the ideological differences, characterizing these leaders permanently as petty bourgeois, making them appear to be ingrained factionalists, and promoting a campaign of monstrous personal slanders against them. On this aspect we would like to point out at least two scandalous cases: the effort to destroy the political character of Comrade Socorro Ramírez, promoted personally by Comrade Moreno, as was amply demonstrated before hundreds of participants (more than 300) at the recent convention of the PST. Comrade Moreno publicly branded the most important Trotskyist leader in our country and the indisputable symbol of the mass movement as a petty-bourgeois student type; he resorted in addition to threats and blackmail of all kinds and accused her of forming part of a secret faction against which he had organized a "pro-Bolshevization" faction. In addition he resorted desperately to trying to promote alternatives for the presidential candidate by means of flattering other figures. This attempt was roundly defeated by the spectacular reply of thousands of workers who came to hear Comrade Socorro and to speak with her as the presidential candidate, and by the adherence of the LCR (Liga Comunista Revolucionaria), the OCR (Organización Comunista Ruptura), and the URS (Unión Revolucionaria Socialista) to the campaign. Moreno even carried on this campaign of detraction internationally as has been confirmed by all the Colombian comrades who are members of our party in Europe. At this Central Committee meeting an attempt is being made to prolong the penalty imposed on Socorro which if successful would amount to a genuine expulsion. The same goes for the attempt, personally promoted by Comrade Moreno, to politically destroy Comrade Ricardo Sánchez. In his immense mountain of slanders, Moreno has gone so far as to portray Ricardo as a racist. Behind the back of the party, Moreno promoted the actual expulsion of Comrade Ricardo from his duties in the leadership of the PST. Moreno even barred him from attending the party convention to reply to the "new" charges mounted with respect to the secret faction led by Ricardo. Moreno's letter of "accusations" and slanders against Ricardo, which was shown to a limited number of members, its circulation being restricted, reduced to excerpts; but we are going to bring it to the attention not only of the whole party and of Colombian Trotskyism but of our world movement. In the letter the singular method is employed of calling the slanders "provisional," part of a "first draft." Comrade Ricardo is ready to have his conduct judged by a tribunal named by the bodies of the international and to accept the verdict pronounced by it. The political and moral vindication of our leaders is for us a matter of principle, *as the tradition of the Trotskyist movement teaches.*

A conception of deformed democratic centralism is being advanced that comes close to bureaucratic centralism, a conception similar to the one held by Zinoviev, bordering on the worst justifications advanced by the Stalinists. The metaphor "the party acts like an army" has been made the guideline of this conception. It is forgotten that the party acts like an army in an absolutely energetic and central-

ized way—but *in relation to the class struggle*. And nothing is more foreign to a Leninist and Trotskyist party than the use of army language within it, or the concept of a clique implicit in the military. The notions of hierarchy and authority residing in the leading bodies are based on the political reality of recognition by the party ranks. The authority emanating from these bodies is that given by a commonly respected policy. The recognition of Lenin's revolutionary leadership was based on his capacity, knowledge, energy, and experience and not on the fact that he belonged to a directing apparatus.

Moreno proceeded then to eliminate political discussion, branding it as swamp-like and studentist in character. Necessary information on the contradictions among the leaders was hidden from the party. Centralism was carried to unheard of lengths. The step was clearly taken of constituting a faction against the party. To this is to be added the fact that the Argentine members responded to their own leadership and in actuality constituted a parallel leadership above the leadership bodies and appearing as superimposed on the party. The party convention itself lost all political authenticity when it was declared to be "sui generis" (???), that is, *abnormal*. Abnormal because it was not preceded by a normal democratic debate—three months—and because the documents themselves were presented, as in the case of the statutes and the Political Report, a week before the convention, and even on the opening day of the deliberations. Democracy was cut down still further when the convention was prevented from acting as a sovereign body and priority was given to the interests of a group that demanded absolute loyalty to these interests. With this objective, the phantasm of a secret faction was created and various comrades were manipulated, being fed all kinds of false information that converted them into sectarians. A political and organizational crisis was thus precipitated, and in face of a new avalanche of persecution against worker leaders and cadres of the leadership of the party the crisis acquired mounting dimensions.

It was forgotten that democratic centralism is defined as a dynamic reality dependent on the relation of the party to the class struggle. Likewise forgotten was the excellent teaching of Trotsky:

"The regime of a party does not fall ready-made from the sky but is formed gradually in the struggle. A *political line predominates* over the regime. First of all, it is necessary to define strategic problems and tactical methods correctly in order to solve them. The organizational forms *should correspond* to the strategy and tactic. Only a *correct policy* can guarantee a healthy party regime. This, it is understood, does not mean that the development of the party does not raise organizational problems as such. But it means that the formula for democratic centralism must inevitably find a *different expression in the parties of different countries and in different stages of development of one and the same party*.

"Democracy and centralism do not at all find themselves at an invariable ratio to one another. Everything depends on the concrete circumstances, on the *political situation* in the country, on the strength of the party and its experience, on the general level of its members, on the authority the leadership has succeeded in winning. Before a conference, when the problem is one of formulating a political line for the next period, democracy triumphs over

centralism. When the problem is political action, centralism subordinates democracy to itself. Democracy again asserts its rights when the party feels the need to examine critically its own actions." ("On Democratic Centralism—A Few Words About the Party Regime." *Writings of Leon Trotsky (1937-38)*, page 90. Emphasis added.)

The concept of party practice fostered by Comrade Moreno deviates far from this precise methodological orientation. Hence a regime of administrative penalties and political persecution has become primary today in the PST.

But in addition a propagandistic and apparatus concept of the party has been fostered. Under the pretext of "Bolshevizing it" the apparatus has been placed above the party. The party has been converted practically into a business agency, having been subjected to three financial campaigns in one year, an unusual occurrence in a political party. One of Moreno's favorite phrases is "Finances are the thermometer of the situation in the party." Not the political line as Trotsky said, nor the party's rooting itself in the working class, nor recruiting new cadres . . . but finances; such a conception of centralism, such apparatus deformations have also brought deformations in the application of the party's policies and the erroneous formulation of new policies for the mass movement. Today it is perfectly clear that vacillation and inconsistency were shown in the struggle against the reactionary politics of López, especially against the little constituent assembly which required, as it still does, systematic denunciation in the working-class movement. Today it is perfectly clear how totally mistaken was the characterization of the Citizens National General Strike of September 14 as superstructural, and how mistaken was the failure to mobilize the party for broad and audacious engagement in the strike. Today it is perfectly clear that the dynamics of the mass movement were underestimated and opportunities like the national mobilization of November 18 were not grasped. If a balance sheet is drawn of the main strike struggles in the past six months, we find ourselves facing the very unfortunate fact of the party's failure to participate in them. The case of the oil workers strike constitutes a direct accusation, since this strike represented a unique opportunity in the workers movement in recent years.

In face of these facts of political reality, we have presented alternatives that have been rejected and hidden from the party or misrepresented. The regime has even reached the point of censoring from the press political positions on national policies in the mass movement.

There is an extremely grave fact that involves the moral standing of Trotskyism itself. A campaign was launched in the name of the party to collect funds to aid in setting up the Pluma publishing house in Bogotá. In the leading bodies of the PST, Comrade Moreno held the ambiguous and contradictory position of saying that the publishing house was a party institution when it was a matter of collecting funds and saying that it was a commercial outfit when financial reports were demanded. At the moment Pluma has been subjected to various financial and juridical actions in which the management of the enterprise, irresponsible to say the least, has come under scrutiny. In face of a recent action freezing operations, the Executive Committee of the party has been called on to support the publishing house unconditionally. Such a demand is

completely unacceptable. What corresponds to Trotsky's method is the total independence of the party from any kind of financial apparatus, since the party cannot run the risk of engaging in financial enterprises. The party can only intervene indirectly through agents. The identification of Pluma with the PST has been converted into a dead weight on the prestige of the party; it is obvious that we do not approve either morally or politically of the adventurous management of Comrade Moreno in financial questions. On this, in addition, we are asking that detailed accounts be made available to the party in relation to the funds of the PST both as to what was turned over to the publishing house and what the funds were used for.

We consider ourselves to be main promoters of the effort to make our party a detachment of the international—without this implying any demerit to other comrades who were radically opposed to this—we make this declaration after having consciously thought out all the implications, of having waited for a change and a rectification of the positions we have criticized. The struggle for the unity of our party, placed in danger by the divisionism of Comrade Moreno, is an objective to which we have committed ourselves. The method that we propose to overcome the contradictions is the one that makes our tradition Trotskyist. We seek a democratic discussion leading up to a special convention of the PST in the first week of March. We ask for the immediate repeal of all penalties and the reinstatement of Comrades Ricardo, Gustavo, Gladys, and Socorro in their posts on the Executive Committee.

For this we appeal for the formation of the *Tendencia Democracia Proletaria* (Proletarian Democracy Tendency),

which will undertake the obligation of struggling for the following points as an alternative to the present crisis within the party:

1. We resign from participating in the Bolshevik Tendency.

2. We greet the process of dissolving the factions and tendencies within the international.

3. We support the process of fusion between the PST-C and the LCR and call for a fusion convention to be held in the last week of March.

4. We assert the right of our party to enter into and maintain relations independently with the world bodies in accordance with the statutes of the international. Within the framework of a general policy on an international level, we assert the right of our party to apply national tactics and forge its own leadership on the basis of its own direct experience and without a substitute of any kind. Internationalism does not mean substituting for national leaderships and liquidating them.

5. We hold that the method of resolving the contradictions in the PST-C and guaranteeing unity lies in the calling of a special convention with the following agenda: a. Internal Party Regime. b. Relations between the PST-C and the BT.

6. To struggle for the lifting of the sanctions.

s/Socorro Ramírez, Ricardo Sánchez, Gustavo Vivas, Gladys Jiménez, Ciro Rodan, Jaime Galarza

APPENDIX M

PST Central Committee Resolution Disciplining Jaime Galarza

The Central Committee of the PST declares:

1. That Comrade Jaime Galarza, a member of this body, formed a tendency with several comrades of our party.
2. That, what is worse, this tendency included a comrade separated from the party (R.S.) [Ricardo Sánchez].
3. That Comrade Galarza made this decision at a time when the formation of tendencies in our organization is not permitted without prior authorization of the leadership bodies.

Therefore be it resolved:

1. To immediately discipline Comrade Jaime Galarza, separating him from the party at least until the election campaign is over.
2. That the comrade will maintain his relations with the party and—given his current status as a member of the United Secretariat—with the United Secretariat through the Executive Committee.

APPENDIX N

January 20, 1978, Appeal to United Secretariat From Leaders of the PST Who Formed the Proletarian Democracy Tendency

Bogotá
January 20, 1978

To the Comrades of the United Secretariat

We, leading members of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores, appeal the resolution imposing disciplinary action which was brought against us by the Central Committee of the party held in the month of December 1977 and which included separation from the party until the elections and, in the case of Comrade Ricardo, indefinite separation. In the political context that the party is going through today, what is involved is expulsion covered up under the label of separation.

The following documents explain the political, organizational, and *statutory* framework in which our expulsion and that of one hundred other comrades took place: 1) Declaration of the Proletarian Democracy Tendency and Counterreport on Activities; 2) Balance Sheet of the Convention of the PST; 3) Declaration Concerning the Latest Events; published in the Internal Bulletin No. 1 of the Proletarian Democracy Tendency; 4) The Situation of the PST and Its Perspectives, published in Internal Bulletin No. 2 of the Proletarian Democracy Tendency.

From these documents it is clear that not only have democratic centralism and clear principles of our movement been violated, but an open and blatant policy of political persecution has been followed, organized mainly by Nahuel Moreno and other Argentine leaders who are active in Colombia.

The disciplinary action against Comrade Enrique, delegate to the United Secretariat and member of the Central Committee, was based on his adherence to the Proletarian Democracy Tendency, which was announced at that Central Committee meeting. The same procedure was followed in the case of Comrade Ciro.

The Proletarian Democracy Tendency, as we have explained in the documents referred to, has submitted to these measures in order to fight the divisionist course carried out by the Pro-Bolshevization Tendency founded personally by N. Moreno at the PST convention, the text of which is known by the comrades of the United Secretariat and which continues to be in effect since the convention—in violation of the statutes.

The disciplinary action taken against Ricardo was based on the accusation that he engaged in public activities in violation of the line of the party. This accusation was never substantiated. On the contrary, it was a matter of clear ideological *ensorship*. Comrades of the United Secretariat have in their hands copies of the book by Ricardo in which he explains his positions.

As far as disciplinary actions against Socorro, Gladys, and Gustavo are concerned, in addition to being based on their membership in the Proletarian Democracy Tendency, they stem from completely arbitrary and irrelevant accusations from rank-and-file comrades.

s/Socorro, Gustavo, Gladys,
Ciro, Jaime, Ricardo

APPENDIX O

PST Central Committee Resolution on the Dissolution of Tendencies

The Central Committee does not authorize the formation of the Proletarian Democracy Tendency or of any other tendency or faction before the opening of the next preconvention discussion period to follow the presidential elections of 1978.

APPENDIX P

December 12, 1977, Appeal for a Special Convention of the PST

By Socorro Ramírez

Bogotá
December 12, 1977

Executive Committee of the
Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores
Bogotá

Comrades:

Article 26 of the Statutes of our party states: "A special convention of the party can be called at any time by one-third (1/3) of the rank-and-file members or cells, by one-third of the Central Committee (1/3), or by a majority of the Executive Committee. It cannot be held less than one (1) month after the time that it is called."

As a full member of the Executive Committee and the Central Committee, I ask the Executive Committee to permit the holding of a national referendum of the party membership on the question of holding a special convention for the first week of March of next year. Our party is experiencing an acute political crisis. There is a de facto tendency fight shaking everything up. The leadership's response to the political differences was to take disciplinary measures against various leaders while claiming that these measures were in response to violations of democratic centralism. The unity of our party has been broken

for those motives. We think that the PST still represents the most advanced effort at building a revolutionary party of the proletariat and toiling masses of Colombia. At the present time there are enormous possibilities to build a strong Trotskyist party in Colombia. We must not squander them with impunity. The revolutionary Marxists are increasingly making efforts and taking steps towards unification. This is something we must hail if we really are for Trotskyism and for a united and centralized Fourth International.

The political origins of the crisis and the current differences are these:

A year and a half ago, when the Bolshevik Tendency was born, our party affiliated to it as a group; the party regime (the present regime) was approved without much discussion at the convention, a convention that the leadership itself characterized as abnormal and sui-generis. So we have to discuss these two points, and find the solution to the conflicts at a special convention. Democracy is the only thing that can save our party at the present time. There is no other way. The problem is political, not organizational. The present leadership must demonstrate to the rank and file that it represents the majority of the party.

Fraternally,
s/Socorro Ramírez

APPENDIX Q

Motion Adopted by PST Executive Committee on the Question of Holding a Special Convention

I. Keeping in mind that:

a. The Central Committee of our party, at its meeting last December 9-12, voted to approve the calling of a special convention of the PST following the June elections, whose main aim will be to evaluate the election campaign we have been carrying out.

b. Despite that resolution two letters have reached the Executive Committee of the party requesting that a special convention be held in March (one from comrade Socorro Ramírez and the other from the Neiva cell) and another letter from the Pasto collective requesting a convention in January. The three agree that the points that should be dealt with are the lifting of the sanctions and the party regime.

c. None of the petitions are based on essential differences with the political line the party has been following in its main campaign—the election campaign—which would suggest the need for a speedy rectification to save the party from disaster. On the contrary, the big successes we

have been achieving in this arena have been recognized by all the members of the PST, including the comrades who have launched the faction fight.

d. Instead, the apparently most serious argument raised by those who maintain that it is necessary to move up the date for the special convention to March or January is that the party is in crisis and that the Central Committee resolutions, with the disciplinary measures that were voted for, place the unity of the party in danger. According to these comrades, only advancing the date of the convention can save the party from this crisis and split.

II. The Central Committee considers that:

a. In effect the party has been placed on the verge of a split by the factional, liquidationist actions of a group of comrades who have carried out an entire campaign of political and moral defamation against the majority of its leadership cadres and the leadership of the BT. They have resorted to the most abject, lumpen methods and have been supported by the new unprincipled bloc in our inter-

national composed of leaders of the ex-IMT and ex-LTF. They have not hesitated to collaborate with individuals completely outside our party—including the bourgeoisie itself—elements who have been repudiated and declared enemies of our party by the overwhelming majority of our national leadership.

b. The holding of the special convention when we are in the midst of an election campaign would mean that we would have to immediately stop the party's external work and throw ourselves totally into an internal, factional preconvention discussion period. (Something which even Jean-Pierre himself, a member of the United Secretariat and the ex-IMT, had to admit at our Central Committee meeting.)

Any comrade who has been moderately active in the past months knows perfectly well the effort involved in carrying out the election campaign, the time demanded, etc.

If we were to now decree the opening of a preconvention discussion period to once again discuss the question of the disciplinary measures and the party regime, the practical consequences would be totally obvious: putting the brakes on the activity which has been enabling the party to reach out to the masses, losing the small and large gains we have been making with this course, and not taking advantage of the excellent prospects that have presented themselves to us through this work. Then we certainly would be able to speak of a crisis in the party, but not the crisis the liquidationist faction is talking about. Rather a total crisis that would demoralize the membership as a whole and would place the very existence of our organization in danger.

c. We must also be very clear about the problem of party unity. The unity of the party has been and continues to be threatened, but not by the political differences or disagreements that may exist among its members (something that is not only natural but necessary for the party to be a living organism and to be able to advance). Rather it is threatened by the factional, liquidationist methods of a group of comrades who, as the result of their petty-bourgeois characteristics, have shown—and continue to show—that they are not willing to abide by the will of the majority of the party.

These comrades say they want a different regime in the party, one where tendency struggles can be carried out at any time and constantly, etc. Such a regime would be incompatible with the principles of democratic centralism with which we are building our party. Nonetheless, the comrades have every right to hold and defend such a concept and none of them has been sanctioned or could be sanctioned for that reason. But that does not mean that the comrades can act according to that concept of the party when the majority has delineated another concept. It does not mean that they can disregard all party bodies and resort to disloyal, factional methods of defamation of the leadership, etc., because in so doing they only destroy the party organization.

If the comrades are disregarding the resolutions unanimously adopted on this matter at the founding convention (held scarcely four months ago), why do they want a special convention in March? Have they perhaps shown by their actions that they are going to respect the majority at this convention if it turns out that they remain a minority?

Party unity is not guaranteed by moving up the special convention because of people who insist on lightly disregarding the positions and resolutions of the majority. It is guaranteed by the minority respecting the will of the majority of the party, that is, respecting democratic centralism, keeping all of us more deeply imbedded in the mass movement with our politics, and deepening our application of the party discipline we have begun to build up. Only thus can a Marxist objectively evaluate the correctness or incorrectness of its politics and of its internal functioning.

d. At present, far from abiding by the Central Committee resolutions, those comrades are simply insisting on their liquidationist methods. Not only have they constructed a leadership parallel to that of the party (which organizes its own tours, etc.) but they are also beginning public attacks (like the article by Valverde in "El Pueblo" from Cali). They are distributing their factional materials to other political organizations; and comrade Socorro Ramírez, accompanied by Jorge Posada, and under the sponsorship of comrade Jean-Pierre, goes off to Mexico to give a report to the PRT on the situation in the Colombian PST without even having notified the party leadership of her trip and abandoning her election work.

e. These facts only confirm the characterization made by the Central Committee in December with regard to the split dynamic of this liquidationist faction. Thus, party comrades should understand that the call to move the special convention up to March, far from tending to resolve the question of party unity, constitutes the final maneuver of that faction before it splits, an attempt to see how many more fish it can catch from the muddied waters. Comrades should know that at the same time the Central Committee meeting was taking place, comrades from Medellín and Cali—kept up to date with what was happening in the Central Committee meeting through phone calls from these comrades—were organizing to split the party, trying to take over the regional locals. That split was slowed down later by those in charge of the faction when they saw that a March convention could be the banner around which they could win more followers from within our party before formalizing the split.

f. For such purposes the comrades have suddenly resorted to the party statutes; *but only one of the articles since they have violated almost all the rest!!* Article 25 states: "A special convention of the party can be called at any time by one-third (1/3) of the rank-and-file members or cells, by one-third of the Central Committee (1/3), or by a majority of the Executive Committee. It cannot be held less than one (1) month after the time it is called. The calling of a special convention can be defended by members who work in any rank-and-file body of the party through the internal bulletin."

At the December Central Committee meeting, making use of precisely this article, more than two-thirds of the full members voted to ratify the call made by the PST founding convention to hold a special convention after the June elections where the party as a whole would discuss and decide on all the points posed.

Thus, if the convention has already been called, the only thing that can be done is move its date up or back, something already decided by the Central Committee. The article mentioned only spells out the mechanisms for calling a special convention. In no way does it help

determine the date of the convention, as the liquidationist faction has tried to make it appear.

The difference then is clear: it is not that one sector of the party is asking for a special convention and another is refusing. Rather, it is a difference of a maximum of four months over the date on which it should be held; months that are decisive for the life of the party. If the convention takes place in March we throw out the election campaign; if it takes place at the latest in July, we carry out THE TWO TASKS: the elections and the convention. Why can't these comrades wait? We feel it is due to the desperation that characterizes petty-bourgeois currents.

We know that some comrades may be in agreement on moving up the date for the convention, comrades who are loyal to the party and are honestly convinced that it could mean a solution to the problems created by that liquidationist faction. But they also must be conscious that by holding that position they are objectively collaborating with the divisionist maneuver of the faction.

The leadership is convinced that it must defend to the death the resolutions of the convention and of the Central Committee to save and strengthen the party. Comrades who know how to place the interests of the party above all else will be able to wait three or four months to hold the convention while we fully throw ourselves into the final

stretch of our political campaign. And if the leadership is wrong, it can be thrown out by the convention itself.

III. Therefore, the Executive Committee, meeting January 5, 1978, resolves:

a. To continue with all our energy the election and financial campaign, the plans for the next two months of which will reach all the members through the internal bulletin.

b. To ratify the calling of the special convention for after the June elections, a call made by the convention and ratified by the December Central Committee meeting, setting as the outside date for it to be held the month of July and incorporating into its tentative agenda the points on sanctions and the party regime.

c. That there is no place for a referendum in any body of the party with regard to the date for the special convention that has already been called.

d. That all the members and candidates must *respect* this resolution, immediately go to work on the election plans in their region and the tasks that flow from this.

e. That *whoever does not obey* places himself outside the PST and his separation from the party will be immediately formalized.

APPENDIX R

Memorandum to United Secretariat From Proletarian Democracy Tendency Supporters

Informational Memorandum for the USFI on the Situation in the PST

The circumstances that have provoked an artificial crisis in the PST and have led the Pro-Bolshevization Tendency—an appendix of the Bolshevik Tendency—to split it, have led many cells, though not all, to carry out a discussion on the reasons for the above crisis.

The aforementioned discussion, which has been slowed down and even sabotaged often by the Pro-Bolshevization Tendency, has brought forth statements from the rank and file of the party which can be summarized as follows:

1. For rejection of the sanctions against leading comrades Socorro, Gustavo, Jaime, Gladys, Ciro, and Ricardo, and for their participation and reintegration in the party and the leadership.

2. To request the calling of a special convention of the party for the month of March, in accordance with article 24 of the statutes. Such a convention is the proper method of resolving the conflicts and preserving the unity of the PST.

3. Adherence to the positions of the Proletarian Democracy Tendency.

The leadership of the Pro-Bolshevization Tendency proceeded to use the Executive Committee to declare that the democratic norms allowed in the statutes were suspended, and they explicitly prohibited anyone from invoking article 24 of the statutes; they announced that anyone

who did so would automatically be suspended from the party.

They also announced that the request for a special convention was a last resort, a maneuver by those whom they labelled *factionalists*. *In addition they proceeded to unleash a campaign of threats, including physical ones.* We call the attention of the comrades of the USFI to IB No. 43 of January 7, 1978, in which the resolution we mention is published.

The statements by the rank and file very quickly began to show that the *majority* of the PST would be behind the positions of the Proletarian Democracy Tendency. We attach the names of the members and organized sympathizers who have stated their agreement, and it should be noted that we do not yet have the opinions expressed in some of the party units. Comrades Riel and Enrique, members of the USFI, witnessed the collection of these signatures. Obviously this plebiscite is not an attempt to get the leadership of our tendency officially recognized as the sole leadership of the PST. The Trotskyist method is to appeal for a democratic discussion, so that a convention can express the real situation in the party, solve the conflicts, and guarantee the unity of the PST. This is exactly what we are asking for, and this is what is in our document, "Declaration of the Proletarian Democracy Tendency." The aim of the plebiscite, which was carried

out in accordance with the internal norms of the party (article 24), is to ask for the convening of a convention.

To guarantee the authority and democratic character of the special convention that we are asking for, we ask for the intervention of the United Secretariat; in addition this

would help promote the process of fusion of the Trotskyists into a single party in Colombia.

For the PDT
Socorro, Gustavo, Jaime,
Gladys, Ciro, Ricardo

Below are the names of the members and organized sympathizers who have signed.

APPENDIX S

January 25, 1978, Letter to United Secretariat From the PST Executive Committee

Bogotá
January 25, 1978

United Secretariat
Brussels

Dear Comrades,

On the basis of the telephone call we received, it seemed to us that you had taken a definitive decision concerning our request to postpone discussion on the internal situation of the Colombian PST to the March United Secretariat meeting. Our request is based on the absolute impossibility of a delegation of our Executive Committee making a trip to Europe at the present time because of the heavy tasks we have in relation to the municipal elections, which will take place in less than a month, and due to financial difficulties we're undergoing after six months of an electoral campaign for which our party has shouldered 95 percent of the expenses. From the conversation with Comrade Robs, however, we had the impression that our request was being rejected. At a meeting with the secretariat of our party today, Comrade Riel informed us that the discussion on the internal situation of the Colombian PST would not be postponed, even if our party could not be present. Faced with this situation we are communicating our position in written form.

1. In our opinion, the refusal to postpone the discussion on Colombia means the possibility of new maneuvers by the United Secretariat majority against our party. We learned from Jean-Pierre that you intended to launch terrible accusations against us. You know that it will be impossible for us to answer, but you are going ahead on the basis of factional, antidemocratic criteria. For us, the urgent problems of the Colombian situation are those of the class struggle and within this the problem of the electoral campaign. Our party, supported by the Bolshevik Tendency, adopted the line of "Workers and Socialist Unity Candidates," which has been accepted by all the Colombian Trotskyists; but the United Secretariat does not seem to be in a hurry to discuss this and to draw the necessary lessons for the Fourth International. The aim of such a discussion, which according to the Bureau cannot be postponed, cannot be to help us overcome our problems,

but to justify the already-announced propaganda campaign against our party and the Bolshevik Tendency, with which the United Secretariat delegation to our December CC attempted to threaten, intimidate, and blackmail us.

2. This factional attitude on the part of the United Secretariat majority is nothing but a further step in your political activity in Colombia. It can be said that the entire policy of the IMT was aimed at dividing and weakening Colombian Trotskyism, instead of unifying and strengthening it. You began with the visit of Comrade Mandel, who supported a line of unification "in two stages," which was completely sectarian and discriminated against our party. This line, along with hopes for building a pro-IMT section stronger than our party through an unprincipled unification, completely failed since the LCR was paralyzed by internal battles. The disaster was so clear that Comrade Mandel did not come back to Colombia again, and he was replaced by Comrade Riel.

Comrade Riel made a very progressive step—although not self-critical: he recognized the political and organizational failure of the IMT's line in Colombia and recognized the political and organizational victory of our party and the Bolshevik Tendency. Therefore, his orientation was to try to save what remained of this sector. For this purpose, he was obliged to help split it and rid it of the dead weight of the most ultraleft wing (the ex-LOC) and to help line these forces up with our electoral policy and with a project of unification of Colombian Trotskyists which recognized the PST as its political and organizational backbone. Unfortunately, it is now clear that these positive steps by Comrade Riel had been determined by the conjunctural situation; as soon as he thought that a situation favorable to factionalism existed once again, he returned to his old practices and methods. In this, he enjoyed the support and collaboration of the ex-LTF, represented by Comrade Hansen. It is already possible to make an initial balance sheet of the activity of this unprincipled bloc which today is the majority of the leadership of the international. They have provoked and achieved a split in our party, which is one of the most dynamic and promising in the Fourth International; the first practical task of the bloc which now leads our international has been to try to liquidate the

PST. From these first steps, we can foresee the future dynamic of this bloc.

3. The United Secretariat delegation to our December Central Committee meeting was perfectly well aware of the characteristics of the group of comrades who split from our party. Its internal and public factionalism had been sufficiently proven. However, the United Secretariat delegation did not come to Colombia to call on the factional group to accept the political and organizational resolutions which had been unanimously approved two months earlier at the founding convention of the PST (resolutions which were so correct that Comrade Riel himself defended them in the LCR). Neither did the delegation come to push the factional group to respect one of the basic rules of democratic centralism, the acceptance by the minority of the decisions of the majority. For Hansen and Riel, the public distribution of PST and Fourth International internal material at the theater where the national electoral conference took place did not deserve to be condemned. None of the three United Secretariat delegates defended Comrade Moreno, who was charged in a slanderous and irresponsible way by the factional group with using money to buy leaders of our party. Neither did they defend our leaders charged with having sold out. No one defended the Trotskyist publishing house attacked with bourgeois methods by the bourgeois Jorge Posada Lalinde, who "happens to be" a friend of the factional group and the companion of one of its members, Socorro Ramírez.

The United Secretariat delegates went so far as to theoretically justify the anti-Argentine reaction which is peculiar to the factional group of Ricardo Sánchez and Socorro Ramírez. The hackneyed theses of the destruction of cadres, the annihilation of "thinking" leaders, of repression and substitution in the national leadership by Argentine "Morenoists" were clearly supported by Hansen, who was the first defender of the factionalists. The comrades of the Argentine PST were the main target of the United Secretariat delegates; the attacks against them were launched in such a way as to endorse the chauvinist campaign that has recently developed. The new morality which seems to inspire the United Secretariat majority is not to unambiguously condemn the irresponsible and wild charges against experienced comrades who have proven themselves if not once a thousand times in the most acute class struggle under the bloodiest repression. On the contrary, their morality is to refrain from taking a position, to insinuate doubts, to ask for an inquiry commission—for which the slanderers themselves don't dare to ask, since they know very well that they cannot prove their charges—and, in fact, become accusers themselves. All this conforms to the theory of "Argentine colonization," a theory which only proves their political inability to lead our international and their even greater inability to answer the criticisms and political alternatives presented by the Bolshevik Tendency more than a year ago.

4. As was inevitable, the desperate factionalism of people who for reasons of prestige want to keep the leadership of the international at any price despite their proven inability to play this role in the case of such key events in the class struggle as Argentina and Bolivia earlier, and later Portugal, Angola, and Spain, led not only to an unprincipled front among Trotskyists but also to complicity and collaboration with bourgeois and lumpen

elements. Comrade Riel took the personal responsibility of inviting the bourgeois Jorge Posada to attend the plenum of the Mexican PRT, while knowing that this man had attempted to rob Editorial Pluma (as is clear from his own declaration, which is attached), legally froze its operation, and attempted to provoke its collapse; he was also aware that the December Central Committee of the PST had declared him an enemy of the PST and the Fourth International. Adopting an openly factional attitude and endorsing this bourgeois element, Comrade Jean-Pierre didn't take into consideration the position taken by an organization which claims allegiance to the Fourth International; he supported an individual challenged by this organization, one *who had not been defended by any Trotskyist* in Colombia or anywhere else in the world.

Even worse is the campaign launched in the bourgeois press by a lumpen element like Umberto Valverde, a campaign against the comrades of the Argentine PST who were forced by the Videla coup to come to Colombia, and in particular against Comrade Moreno (we attach clippings on this). This journalist, who is a personal friend of Ricardo Sánchez and other members of the factional group, presents himself, with the help of this group, as a member of the Colombian PST, which he never was. He has launched a real police-style crusade against the Argentine comrades. The sharply chauvinist character of this campaign is obvious. The allusions to robbery, "mafia-like" conduct, use of arms, etc., are not only an appeal to the nationalist backwardness of the Colombian masses, but also to a direct intervention by the repressive state apparatus. In a meeting held on the twenty-fifth with Comrade Riel (a tape recording of which is available to the United Secretariat), we asked that as a United Secretariat member he intervene with the LCR and the factional group to get them to make a statement denouncing Valverde's police-style and chauvinist campaign. Comrade Riel refused to make such an intervention, demonstrating his complicity with this element and the lumpen and police-style methodology he uses, which are useful for Riel's basic aim: to liquidate the PST.

Finally, a third element related to the moral decomposition of the United Secretariat delegation and more particularly of Comrade Riel is the failure to answer the charges against Comrade Moreno. Riel's answer, according to which it was necessary to make an inquiry, only results in encouraging the slanderers to carry on with their slanders. Until now, nobody has dared make formal charges against Comrade Moreno; the factionalists limited themselves to private and public gossip. They themselves didn't dare ask for an inquiry commission on Comrade Moreno to prove the alleged maneuver of buying leaders and other types of things. They know that in the last six months Comrade Moreno has spent barely a month in Colombia, given the tasks he had to carry out for the Argentine PST and the Bolshevik Tendency, which compelled him to travel constantly. They know that the result of any inquiry commission would be to unmask these slanderers and to place them outside of the international. Comrade Jean-Pierre, assuming an attitude that appeared neutral but was de facto absolutely factional, stated that he would ask the United Secretariat to send an inquiry commission to Colombia, in spite of the fact that there are no formal charges. This attitude is completely inadmissible. We cannot accept a commission which investigates rumors. If

Comrade Jean-Pierre asks for a commission of inquiry, it's because he agrees with the charges. Thus, he has to present them and prove them. If he doesn't do so, Comrade Riel himself is a slanderer and deserves to be treated as such in the international.

5. For all these reasons: for developing a factional policy aimed at liquidating our party; for having been complicit by their silence with the slanders against the Argentine comrades, against Comrade Moreno, and against the leaders of the Colombian PST; for having made an alliance with a bourgeois who tried to destroy a Trotskyist publishing house; for having been de facto accomplices of a lumpen who is conducting a public chauvinist and police-style campaign in the bourgeois press; for having encouraged a petty-bourgeois and factional current to break with the party—for all these reasons, we consider the United Secretariat delegation composed of comrades Riel, Hansen, and Galarza morally impeached and thus unable to give any kind of report to the United Secretariat on the situation of our party. For the same reason, we would have liked to be present at the United Secretariat to expose the political and moral decomposition of these comrades before the entire Fourth International. If the United Secretariat does not want to sink as low as comrades Riel, Hansen, and Galarza have sunk; if the United Secretariat wants to prove to the international that its present majority is not an unprincipled front against the Bolshevik Tendency and against our party; if it wants to make clear that it does not support the alliance which its representatives made with lumpens and bourgeois; if it wants to take its distance from chauvinist, police-style methods which the factional group and the United Secretariat delegates employed, the United Secretariat must accept the proposals made by the PST Executive Committee, which we repeat here:

a) postpone the discussion on Colombia until the next meeting of the United Secretariat, at which a delegation from the Colombian PST will be present;

b) publicly repudiate and declare an enemy of the

Fourth International the lumpen Umberto Valverde and his chauvinist, police-style campaign against the exiles of the Argentine PST in Colombia;

c) publicly repudiate and declare an enemy of the Fourth International the bourgeois Jorge Posada and his attempt to liquidate a Trotskyist publishing house;

d) demand that the LCR and the self-proclaimed "Proletarian Democracy Tendency" make a public statement along the same lines indicated in points b and c, as well as call an immediate halt to the chauvinist campaign they are carrying out, which is endangering the security of the Argentine comrades in Colombia (see Internal Bulletin No. 1 of the Proletarian Democracy Tendency, attached);

e) demand that all those who, at the founding convention of the PST, at the December CC, and at various meetings launched moral charges against Comrade Moreno and the leadership of the Colombian PST make their charges in writing within one month's time. If they don't do so, to sanction as slanderers all the comrades who made them, on the basis of tape recordings that the PST leadership can provide which show that such charges have been made;

f) call upon the self-proclaimed "Proletarian Democracy Tendency" to accept the discipline of the majority of the leadership and the vast majority of the rank and file of the Colombian PST, verified at the founding convention, at the December CC, and at regional assemblies organized later;

g) ask the Executive Committee of the LCR to stop its factional orientation and to return to the unification agreement which had previously been reached and which was approved by Comrade Riel;

h) support the electoral campaign and condemn all public attacks and sabotage of the PST's activities.

Fraternally,
Executive Committee
Partido Socialista de los
Trabajadores (Colombia)

APPENDIX T

Excerpt From Minutes of United Secretariat Meeting, January 27-29, 1978

8. Colombia

Motion by Romero: In view of the fact that several weeks ago the leadership of the Colombian PST asked that the discussion on Colombia be postponed until the next United Secretariat meeting, since already-planned activities regarding the electoral campaign made it impossible for them to send representatives of their leadership to the January meeting;

In view of the fact that, for the above-mentioned reasons, the representative of the Argentine PST asked one week ago to postpone the discussion on Colombia in order that the Colombian PST comrades could participate in it;

The United Secretariat decides to postpone the discussion on Colombia to its next meeting.

Countermotion by Petersen: To proceed to hear a reading of two letters to the United Secretariat, one from the leadership of the Colombian PST and another from the Proletarian Democracy Tendency of the PST, which explain the importance of maintaining the point on Colombia on the agenda.

Motion by Petersen Carried

Letter from PST(C) leadership read. [See Appendix S.]
Appeal from Proletarian Democracy Tendency read. [See Appendix N.]

Statement by Romero: Despite the request made by the comrades of the Colombian PST to postpone discussion on Colombia until the next meeting in order that they could participate in it, the United Secretariat Bureau decided to include Colombia on the agenda. The United Secretariat majority has now rejected the proposal I made in the same sense, and thus has decided to have a discussion from which the most interested parties (or, as it were the principal indictees) will be purposely excluded. This decision, which violates the elementary rights of the Colombian party and leadership to hear the charges against them and to answer them, is aimed at taking further steps in the frameup being prepared against the Colombian PST, the Bolshevik Tendency, and in the final analysis once more against the leadership of the Argentine PST and Comrade Moreno himself. It is also a decision which breaks with the practice of the United Secretariat, which often postpones for months discussions and decisions as important or even more important than this one. For instance, to give only some examples, the discussion on the character of the famous document entitled "The Red Book" ("El Libro Rojo") written by the PRT Combatiente, as well as on the break of this organization from the Fourth International. More recently, discussions have not been carried out with the same speed on the case of Fausto Amador. The attitude taken by the United Secretariat majority is determined solely by the factional interests of the unprincipled bloc which is attempting to obstruct the fight in which the comrades of the Colombian PST are engaged, the fight for a real Leninist combat party and, more generally, the fight of our tendency to defend a truly Bolshevik policy, party regime, and morality inside the international. This profoundly antidemocratic decision deepens the action initiated by comrades Jean-Pierre and Hansen in their intervention in the PST Central Committee meeting; in this way, it opens a new and serious situation in the international to which my party and the Bolshevik Tendency will not fail to respond.

These considerations have led me to decide to refrain from intervening (and from participating in any kind of vote) on the item on Colombia, to ask that my declaration be added to the minutes, and, as a member of the United Secretariat, the leadership of the Argentine PST and the Bolshevik Tendency, to denounce the arbitrary nature of the decision taken by the new majority of the United Secretariat, which I do not consider valid.

Statement by Duret and Stateman: In light of the report made by Comrade Riel at the United Secretariat meeting held at the end of October, the United Secretariat Bureau asked comrades Riel, Hansen, and Enrique to attend in the capacity of observers the meeting of the Colombian PST Central Committee held December 9-12, 1977.

1. The United Secretariat Bureau, through a letter and telephone calls, immediately informed the leadership of the Colombian PST that this delegation would be sent. The leadership did not have any objections. The Bureau asked the delegation to make a report to the next meeting of the United Secretariat. At the end of the CC meeting the delegation made it known to the meeting that a point on the internal situation in the PST would be placed on the

agenda of the United Secretariat meeting of January 27-29, and not the meeting scheduled for December 17-18.

2. In a letter dated January 5, 1978, sent to the leadership of the PST, the United Secretariat Bureau confirmed that the point on Colombia would be placed on the agenda of the January United Secretariat meeting. In another letter dated January 17, the Bureau explicitly invited the leadership to participate in this United Secretariat meeting. In order to ensure that this invitation would reach the leadership, on January 18 Comrade Sylvain spoke on the telephone with Camilo González, political secretary of the PST-C, in order to repeat this invitation. In another telephone call on January 20, Comrade Sylvain informed Comrade González that the point on the internal situation in the PST would be on the agenda.

3. Thus, comrades Riel, Hansen, and Enrique had been mandated to report to the January United Secretariat. Following this every step was taken in order to inform the leadership of the PST of all procedures and in order to ensure the presence of a representative of this leadership. Finally, the United Secretariat received an appeal from seven members of the PST Central Committee, along with a list of more than 300 members and candidates who had been "separated from the party" for having demanded the right to form a tendency or for calling for a special convention of the PST. These disciplinary actions were a violation of the statutes of the PST and those of the Fourth International.

All this not only justified, but made it necessary to place the point on the situation in the Colombian PST on the agenda of this United Secretariat.

Riel reported on developments in the Colombian PST. [See page 3.]
Discussion.

Motion by Riel. [See page 8.]

Statement by Marline: I agree with the resolution proposed by the United Secretariat on the crisis in the Colombian PST. But I stress that:

1. The question of the relation and articulation between the statutes of the international and those of national sections must be spelled out clearly and made the object of a discussion on democratic centralism in the framework of the preparation for the world congress;

2. This discussion must enable us to differentiate between factions and tendencies: a resolution adopted by the French Central Committee has defined the LCR's position on this question.

Motion by Riel: The United Secretariat has been informed of the grave crisis that Editorial Pluma is now experiencing and of the many consequences that it has already had, particularly in Colombia.

1. The United Secretariat reaffirms the principle of the necessary separation between any autonomous commercial enterprise and the political organization.

2. The United Secretariat specifies that, on the basis of this traditional criterion, Editorial Pluma, which is a

strictly autonomous commercial enterprise, has never been dependent on any body of the Fourth International nor is it linked to it in any way whatsoever. Moreover, no organism of the Fourth International has ever discussed or been consulted on the activities of Pluma.

3. As a result, the name and the authority of the Fourth International or any of its bodies cannot be invoked or used in relation to the present crisis of Pluma and its implications on all levels.

APPENDIX U

January 1978 Letter to United Secretariat

By Socorro Ramírez

Bogotá
January 1978

Comrades of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International and the Colombian PST

The grave internal situation in our party and especially the course chosen by the Bolshevik Faction has placed the electoral campaign in crisis. This requires immediate intercession to resolve the problems in order to take advantage politically of the important achievements and expectations in the best possible way.

We are acting on the basis of the party being divided into two tendencies and not into two parties. This is why we pose the following—and we have been rigorous in the application of this line—that the unity of the party must be maintained, that the ground for the solution of the conflict is united participation in the class struggle and in bringing the electoral campaign to the masses.

While the application of this line strengthens the Proletarian Democracy Tendency [PDT], enabling it to grow, and consolidate its forces, the leadership of the Bolshevik Tendency [BT], through a sectarian course ending in a political crisis, has forced the party into total inactivity. The most important directives have been around fingering comrades, organizing provocations, blocking democracy in the party. At a time when it is necessary to politically arm the party for the campaign, seminars on the BT's documents have led the party into adopting a sectarian attitude toward the international, excluding the democratic debate required in preparing for the special convention called for in accordance with the statutes by the majority of the party. Because they adhere to the PDT, the majority of the party members have been driven out and left without any possibility to participate in party activities. In Baranquilla, for example, it has been literally ordered that the party be paralyzed until the order arrives to expel the majority of the comrades.

We have noted that it would be impermissible for the centrists to gain strength and regain the initiative at the expense of the PST, after they have been forced to accept our electoral policy. We have also noted that UNIOS cannot resolve our internal problems. They have taken internal affairs to the public, saying that we are another

Vote on the above motion:

For:	22	(Adair, Aubin, Brewster, Claudio, Dunder, Duret, Enrique, Fourier, Frej, Georges, Holden, Marline, Otto, Pepe, Petersen, Riel, Roman, Stateman, Susan, Sylvain, Thérèse, Walter)
Against:	0	
Abstaining:	0	
Not voting:	0	

party and that until we admit this in soliciting participation and discussion on the electoral line, all means necessary will be used to impede us from engaging in the campaign. The BT has sought to use UNIOS to legitimize its split tactic and to try to gain exclusive recognition as the PST.

They have tried to behead the candidates nominated democratically by the conventions because the candidates belong to the PDT of the PST. Likewise they have tried to veto them politically from acting as part of the electoral slates, excluding them from meetings, from electoral activity, and from support committees; they are denied the propaganda which was financed through the campaign that we have carried out; they are vetoed from permanent campaign committees and departmental boards, and an attempt has been made to exclude me from the permanent national board; all this with the aim of blocking coordination and information on electoral activities. For this purpose they have engaged in all sorts of secret agreements and maneuvers with the URS, that is, with the centrists. The only explanation which we have heard was given to us in Medellín. As Silva put it, "It's a matter of avoiding any contact with our comrades because they might be won over by you." In that same city, besides this, they prevented us from entering the headquarters in Medellín; and they vetoed Julio César Roda and Luz Helena de Baena—candidates who had been nominated by the conventions and backed by the support committees—because they belonged to the PDT, according to E. Ospina at a UNIOS meeting. Likewise, Isabel, an Argentinian, in an irresponsible, liberal attitude, besides being quite factional, stood at the entrance to the Council of Medellín, while the Departmental Board was being presented, to inform anyone who arrived about the internal situation of the PST. She made such grave declarations as that the PDT comrades who were in the building had all renounced socialism, had capitulated to the Carter Plan and to Eurocommunism, thus forming an unprincipled bloc with the comrades of the majority in the international. That they had been expelled from the party for being lumpen, petty bourgeois and for having stolen the PST's money. Statements such as these were made by a comrade who is with them in Medellín, to the workers of Empresas Públicas, concretely in reference to me in this case, which

elicited a firm reaction on the part of the workers—their decision to reject in a public letter such slanderous and defamatory procedures—and to express in this letter their support to my candidacy.

In Cali, Greco, an Argentinian, showed up at the post of the Cartón de Colombia strikers, where some of the leaders are party militants and with the PDT. They told him to his face that his presence there was a provocation, because he tried to take the internal dispute into the strike itself, in clear detriment to the strike, even at the risk of complicating the situation in front of detectives and police. Also, in this city, having reached an agreement on the party's representation on the permanent committee, as proposed by the comrades of the PDT who constitute the majority of the party, two delegates participated—one from each tendency—when Comrade Camilo G. showed up and excluded the PDT delegate, installing two from his faction. The leaflet he used to justify this maneuver sought to legitimize his faction by appealing to the other organizations for support. In this way the line of the workers and socialist unity candidates was renounced. The line had been that the masses determined who their candidates would be by democratic decisions at conventions and not by secret agreements from above, through electoral deals. The BT method leads to capitulation to the socialist front position which the URS tried to raise. This is why they have not recognized what the conventions decided; this is why they behead those of us candidates who are of the PDT of the PST; that is why it has already been announced in UNIOS that the BT is opposed to my heading up the slate in Bogotá, as was decided by the convention; this is how the secret agreement between Camilo G. and the URS leader H. Molina to support him for the council can be explained. This is the explanation for Camilo G.'s statements to the effect that for them what is fundamental is the strategic question: the construction of the party, that anything opposed to it or that they cannot capitalize on, will be eliminated. This is the reason given for insisting on sabotaging the electoral campaign, no matter what. This explains, too, why they will not maintain the candidacy after the February elections and why they made so many maneuvers—from launching the ill-fated candidacy of Kemel to the attempts by N. Moreno to change and to denigrate it and to promote Comrade Gabriel M. as a leader in a matter of days. And it also explains why they have conciliated with the URS, when the faction within the URS signed agreements in Tello and Campoalegre, towns in Huila, and in Boyacá, with the UNO, contrary to the line of class independence. Is it possible that while they capitulate to centrism, they try to exclude a tendency in the party that defends the electoral line and includes its best exponents, with any kind of methods and at any price?

All these agreements and maneuvers have been carried out by the BT with the URS, in the face of opposition by the LCR and the OCR, who insist on advancing our policy of workers and socialist unity candidates.

The BT deliberately precipitated the crisis and paralyzed the campaign. Up until now they have not nominated the slates that will participate in the elections, nor has the agitation and propaganda been mounted that is indispensable for their success. Not a single board or slate has been drawn up. Since the fundamental criteria followed by the comrades are revenge and electoralist politics, they have maintained an absolutely eclectic attitude in this regard, including proposing a completely artificial coalition in which everyone could present a slate as they saw fit. And that is not all. They have capitulated on programmatic questions such as rejecting the inclusion in our electoral platform of the demand for a People's Revolutionary Constituent Assembly which offers a positive solution to the struggle against the reactionary Small Constituent Assembly proposed by President López.

My electoral tour has been made difficult with the most varied excuses, even though it is currently the main aspect of the electoral campaign. Two examples will illustrate this: in the Department of Huila, during an earlier visit by our Comrade Gustavo, a number of electoral events had been scheduled where I was to be present. As a result of a series of separate agreements reached with the URS and UNO in towns like Campoalegre and Tello, as we already noted, it was suddenly decided that my trip to that region should be cancelled. On the other hand, in Barranca, a previously planned electoral meeting could not be carried out, owing to the fact that the comrades did not bother to organize it. That same day a strike by four thousand oil workers exploded, the same workers who last year participated with the USO in the main strike of recent times.

In the face of all this, our tendency's attitude has been to try to bring about an intraparty agreement which the comrades have insisted on rejecting. We have acted in a united way in the rest of the country without excluding them from any meetings, or from discussions, or from activities in general. Their response has been the one given by Camilo and Kemel when they stated that they will not work in an electoral campaign along with people who do not recognize them exclusively as the party. As is apparent in the appendices which we are sending with this letter, agreements have been proposed even with the OCR and the LCR. Only yesterday a tentative agreement was reached within UNIOS, which the comrades have already begun to violate. For next Saturday they have planned a plenum at which the possibility of making the party crisis public will be decided, thereby completely liquidating the electoral campaign.

Fraternally,
s/Socorro Ramírez

Report From Colombian LCR Leadership on the Situation of the 'UNIOS' Election Campaign and the Unification of the PST and LCR

The election campaign the PST initiated beginning before September 1977, based on class independence of the proletariat and the running of working-class and socialist candidates breaking both with the traditional parties of the bourgeoisie and with the reformists, was shown to be an effective vehicle to bring the politics of revolutionary Marxism to the masses. At the founding meeting of the PST we saw how Socorro Ramírez became the center of a campaign that was well received by hundreds and thousands of workers. At the founding convention of the LCR [Liga Comunista Revolucionaria—Revolutionary Communist League], the momentum acquired by the campaign was noted, which gave our organization no other alternative but to endorse it frankly and openly. Intimately tied in with this electoral proposal was the necessity for unifying revolutionary Marxists in Colombia—which had been the banner of broad sectors of the LCR and was welcomed by the leadership of the PST—through the signing of a political agreement and the definition of a partial basis for fusing the PST and the LCR.

Right now, it is necessary to evaluate the events of the election campaign and the unification in light of the most recent events, especially since other forces coming from a centrist direction have joined the campaign, such as the Unión Revolucionaria Socialista [URS—Revolutionary Socialist Union], and others that are going through a critical stage between centrism and revolutionary Marxism, such as the Organización Comunista Ruptura [OCR—Breakaway Communist Organization]; this raised several problems concerning the election campaign that should be addressed carefully by the LCR. In addition, concerning unification, other factors have entered, creating a different situation from what was foreseen at the time of the signing of the political accord and the formation of the unification commission.

The National Executive Committee should decide on an orientation in this situation based on an objective balance sheet of the situation.

The Situation of UNIOS

In its first phase, the election campaign run by the PST received a decisive push from the tie with the LCR, which guaranteed that masses of people would attend Socorro's appearances on the Atlantic coast. Not only did the campaign find an echo in the masses, but centrist sectors were affected by it; first the OCR, then the URS, joined it. This was when, at the beginning of December, the campaign reached its highest point, at the time of the national conference—just when the URS announced its participation in it.

Later, in mid- and late December and at the beginning of January, the campaign entered a real downturn. This downturn cannot be attributed entirely to such factors as

vacations and Christmas; it was also due to the crises the different organizations participating in the Workers and Socialist Unity campaign went through, crises that—in turn—had repercussions throughout the campaign, producing a morass that still tends to have repercussions on these parties, giving their factional conflicts a sectarian character. The organizations that took part in UNIOS have separated, in responding to the situation of the elections, though in different ways.

- As for the URS, it has just been agitating in its press for its idea of the Democratic Front, seeking a solid alliance with the UNO [Unión Nacional de Oposición—National Opposition Union]. The greater part of the URS is getting ready for an agreement with the CP that, in a later period faced with the collapse of the Democratic Front, turns into a perspective of a purely electoral accord. As this fails too, because of the forces generated inside the URS demanding an agreement with the socialists and a breaking of the agreements with the CP, the URS faces a crisis from which three sectors are emerging: the first, that of Humberto Molina, which still holds the reins of the organization in that it controls the organizational apparatus and the press, has abandoned its characterization of the electoral situation that led it to the concept of the Democratic Front and is now lining up for an agreement with the socialists, maintaining intact its centrist plans. It wants to play a game in which the regional and partial electoral agreements are maintained with the CP and other forces, while it takes part in a national agreement in UNIOS. This is the sector that has led the URS and that knows well enough how many maneuvers on all sides are needed to hold the URS together. On the other hand are those who remain convinced that the clearest outlook is for the Democratic Front and they are intent on pursuing it consistently; in this sense they consider Molina an opportunist who is not carrying through the policy he put forward. It is this sector, led by Sergio Pulgarín and Ricardo Mosquera, that has the best possibilities to channel the ranks who are reluctant to follow their leaders, but it does not have the strength of the leadership.

A third sector has emerged around Alberto Tellez, and is taking shape through a persistent struggle against the concept of the Democratic Front and the agreements with the CP. It seeks a more solid alliance with the socialists. This is the weakest sector of the leadership, but it nonetheless has a certain degree of importance in the working-class and plebeian ranks in Bogotá.

In general, the URS is going through a crisis in which all these sectors end up being converted into factions and place Molina's plan on a very bad footing. He is trying to launch his career again through his negotiations and deals in UNIOS, such as the threat that if his name is not accepted to head up slates in the Bogotá council instead of Socorro's, the URS will go its own way and will support

only the platform and presidential candidacy, that is, the shell without the nuts.

In turn, the Mosquera sector more and more runs up against Molina, to the degree that it needs to find a more favorable ground than the UNO, and allies itself for the time being with Tellez to block Molina in his electoral proposals. Tellez, in turn, steps up his agreements with the more available socialist sectors such as the Proletarian Democracy Tendency, the LCR, and the OCR Socialist Tendency [ST].

- As regards the OCR, it is composed of three sectors stemming from the situation created by the referendum that led to the change in its abstentionist position. The first sector, with at least 50 percent influence in the ranks but in a minority in the leadership—though these figures make the OCR look better—is in favor of allying with the URS and concretely the Molina sector. The second, a small minority, is still abstentionist; the third, a minority in the leadership with 40 percent of the ranks, has formed the Socialist Tendency in which Trotskyists and other sectors close to Trotskyism are found. These sectors and the faction struggle they are carrying on virtually paralyze the organization, which is going through an organizational and financial crisis. Until now, the OCR has not been able to meet its financial obligations. Among these sectors, at any rate, the closest to us is the ST, which also seeks agreements with the Proletarian Democracy Tendency of the PST, the Tellez tendency in the URS and the LCR.

- The PST, which led the campaign and has maintained its position despite the problems that have just come up, has also fallen into a deep crisis, brought on by problems related to the situation of the Fourth International, the internal developments in this party, and the influence of the BT on it. The preponderance of the PST in the first phase of the campaign, which had many causes, had much to do with this crisis, in that the pro-BT leadership of the PST showed no evidence of being aware of the need to maintain its unity as a guarantee for keeping the campaign going strong, and embarked on a splitting and divisive course, going so far as to expel the PST presidential candidate! Exaggerated optimism about the gains of the campaign, which would have been won mainly by the PST, as the CC noted in December, has now led to the breakdown of the "Bolshevik" leaders who find the majority of the PST opposing their ideas and who have gone so far as to expel the majority. The crisis of the PST is the crucial point because to the degree that it has been the center of the campaign, the whole campaign falls down along with it. Here is where Molina is trying to win the trick, blackmailing the PST leadership and negotiating support with its official leadership to win a reversal of its line through a change in the head of the slate for the Bogotá Council.

The founding of the Proletarian Democracy Tendency as a sector of the PST that controls a large part of the work this party has done in the election campaign, in terms of important precandidates, support committees, and activists, places the pro-BT leadership in a difficult position, since it is asking the parties participating in the electoral bloc to solidarize with the measures it has taken. The only favorable response it finds is in the Molina sector, because no one else is interested in supporting this viewpoint, and Molina does so only for the purpose of making a good deal.

- The LCR finds itself at an intermediate point between the PST and the URS on one hand, and the OCR on the other. It has not succeeded in making dynamic its party organizational and financial life, which would enable it to fulfill the financial obligations of the whole campaign, although it has succeeded in keeping step with the other organizations. It does not have the political initiative in UNIOS, either, and is under pressure from the two larger organizations to minimize its importance in the campaign, since they speak of its small forces in the interior and put in question its mobilizing capacity on the Atlantic Coast. The tendency is to reach accords with the PDT of the PST, the ST of the OCR, and the Tellez sector of the URS, seeking mechanisms for carrying out work to put some energy into the election campaign again on the basis of the sectors that best guarantee it, giving a push to the support committees and the departmental groups. Very little is accomplished in the contradictory struggle the PST and the URS are involved in (in their official leaderships). At the same time as they tend to concentrate all the power of UNIOS, they intensify their conflicts in the drawing up of slates. The course of electoralist squabbles, accompanied by questionable political conceptions, has caused the campaign to further stagnate and it needs a new push from the side of the most dynamic sectors, as could be deduced from the above background.

In the framework of the political relations in the election campaign, and with a projection going beyond it, the agreements with the PDT of the PST, the ST of the OCR, and the Tellez sector of the URS are most favorable, as regards the reinforcement of the bases for programmatic and tactical agreement expressed in the UNIOS platform and in the political bases of the accord of the Workers and Socialist Unity front. This is shown in what relates to the need to establish coordination mechanisms, from the ranks, for forming the support committees and departmental groups, outlining positions that give a wide margin for the formation of slates through democratic rank-and-file mechanisms.

The accommodation between the URS and the PST at the head of the election campaign is proving to be a divisive factor: Not knowing that the PST held regional conferences, in many cases representatives of the PDT were placed at the head of the list of candidates. The URS, for its part, is trying to reverse the whole policy of the campaign, getting into a central place in it, and manipulating the agreements with the PST so as to get a privileged position. That is where the accords between these two organization have led; they will ultimately come into conflict and reach an impasse in the campaign itself. That is what is happening today.

The only salvation for the campaign is for its most progressive sectors to be strengthened, through more solid accords, with a plan enabling it to get out of the mire it is in.

The contradictions created around the election campaign reveal a more profound problem. Two alternative poles have been created. One represents the URS leadership and the other the PST leadership in its BT variant. These two poles are fighting for hegemony in the campaign and for the political advantages to be gained. Within this confrontation, the LCR and OCR are more on the PST side, and here is where the attempts by the PST to push aside these two organizations run up against an obstacle to the degree

that they are its base of support in UNIOS against the pretensions of Molina.

Another contradiction has become evident, however, between the BT party-building concept and the view held by the PDT. This places the polarization of the campaign in a different and broader context, between the view that the organizations should wage the campaign because it is a gain for socialism and that all the forces confronting the bourgeoisie and reformism must orient to it, and the view that puts sectarian interests, even personal interests, before the interests of the masses. In the first group are the sectors that do not have apparatuses but plan to cash in on their politics (LCR, PDT, ST, Tellez), and in the other group are the BT and the Molina faction in the URS. This confrontation will have greater ramifications than saving the election campaign. Two different views of building the party that must lead the masses to the socialist revolution are involved. Here is where, despite the programmatic and ideological differences, the BT and Molina, on one hand, and the above-mentioned sectors on the other, coincide. They are two different views of party building; one that cannot be realized, because it is based on one-upmanship and sectarianism, and another that groups greater forces, has a wider field of action, and greater prospects for developing.

The Unification of Revolutionary Marxists

What we said before does not show a clear line of action on the part of the LCR, abandoning the necessary discussion and participation in the determination of UNIOS's forms of functioning. That would be abandoning the field of political maneuver to the two sectors that are leading the campaign to ruin. It is necessary to be clear, however, on the direction that events are taking and to act accordingly. We give priority to the fund-raising work that can be carried on in the ranks, among other things because it is the only way we can maintain a certain strength, instead of getting more and more into debt as the LCR has been.

This is significant in regard to unification, on which it is necessary to make a few points.

In the first place, it has become obvious that the BT is not happy with the unification with the LCR and has used our position to maintain a linkage to the LCR and not as a unification policy. Certainly after expelling more than 180 comrades who express views on specific situations in the international and on party building that are close to ours, the BT cannot have a serious policy of unification!

For the BT, the election campaign must have been both the foundation for the unification and the obstacle to its taking place. This contradiction is revealed in the argument that has existed for the LCR to orient to the campaign promoted by the PST, in which the BT held that this would smooth over 80 percent of the differences, since it sees tactical agreements as taking priority over the programmatic agreements. Once the LCR helped in the election campaign, however, the policy adopted jointly by the two organizations and implemented in unison became

an obstacle; since we are in an election campaign, the BT said, we cannot carry out the unification.

In the election campaign itself, the PST has been reluctant to form teams that would permit greater cohesion between the two organizations.

All these circumstances and facts have shown the inconsistency of the BT on the question of unification. For that reason, all the plans are buffeting the BT leadership: In not setting a date for the convention it delays everything "concrete," such as the election campaign and other things like the joint press, and from there it is only one step to the placing of real obstacles in the way of the demagogic proclamation of unification.

In our unity policy, we must maintain an overall perspective that encompasses the PST as a whole, including the BT. If we consider them Trotskyists and members of our world movement, we must maintain the unification commission, with proposals going beyond intentions, which will draw up a formula looking toward the unification convention which should still be planned for August.

However, it is necessary to distinguish within the totality the most progressive pole in the PST as a whole, especially at the time when the conflicts within it are becoming acute. Of necessity, the most progressive pole, which has to a great degree abandoned the party chauvinism of the BT and its sectarianism toward the international and toward party building on a national level which is characteristic of it, is the Proletarian Democracy Tendency.

We cannot overlook that the PDT's conceptions are at least similar to ours and have been characterized as such by the BT. It reinforces our positions, while the BT is an obstacle to them.

What is at stake is the line of orienting, in a country like Colombia, in which revolutionary Marxism is still weak, toward the construction of a party-sect divorced from the class struggle despite the demagogic proclamations of a policy "toward the masses," or orienting in such a way as to maintain objectivity and understand the real situation of revolutionary Marxism, in which very progressive elements are to be found, such as the differentiation of currents close to us in the OCR and URS, and the intervention of the revolutionary Marxists in these realignments with a policy effectively carrying our ideas to the masses, not for organizational maneuvers but with the aim of organizing those who come around our program. In this sense, the election campaign is a basic element for organizing and solidifying the so-called "socialist current" in the support committees; otherwise a great part of the work will be wasted.

The above has an implication: that there is no way the expulsion of the members of the PDT by the BT can be accepted, to say the least, since this would imply putting a noose around our necks. On the contrary we must base ourselves on it [the PDT], to a great degree, since it represents the salvaging of positions foreign to the BT that have been revealed in the process of internal conflicts, making it clear to the BT the type of party the PDT plans to build and the sincerity of the proclamations in favor of unification of the revolutionary Marxists.